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Melanie Autumn Magidow
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The Dissertation Committee for Melanie Autumn Magidow
certifies that this is the approved version of the following dissertation:

Multicultural Solidarity: Performances of *Malhūn* Poetry in Morocco

Committee:

Samer Ali, Supervisor

Katherine Arens

Kristen E. Brustad

William F. Hanks

Esther Raizen

Multicultural Solidarity: Performances of *Malḥūn* Poetry in Morocco

by

Melanie Autumn Magidow, B.A.; M.A.

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To my parents
who encouraged in me
curiosity, wonder, and imagination

And to Wil, Alex, and Gina,
some of the brightest lights in my universe

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Multicultural Solidarity: Performances of *Malhūn* Poetry in Morocco

Melanie Autumn Magidow, Ph.D.

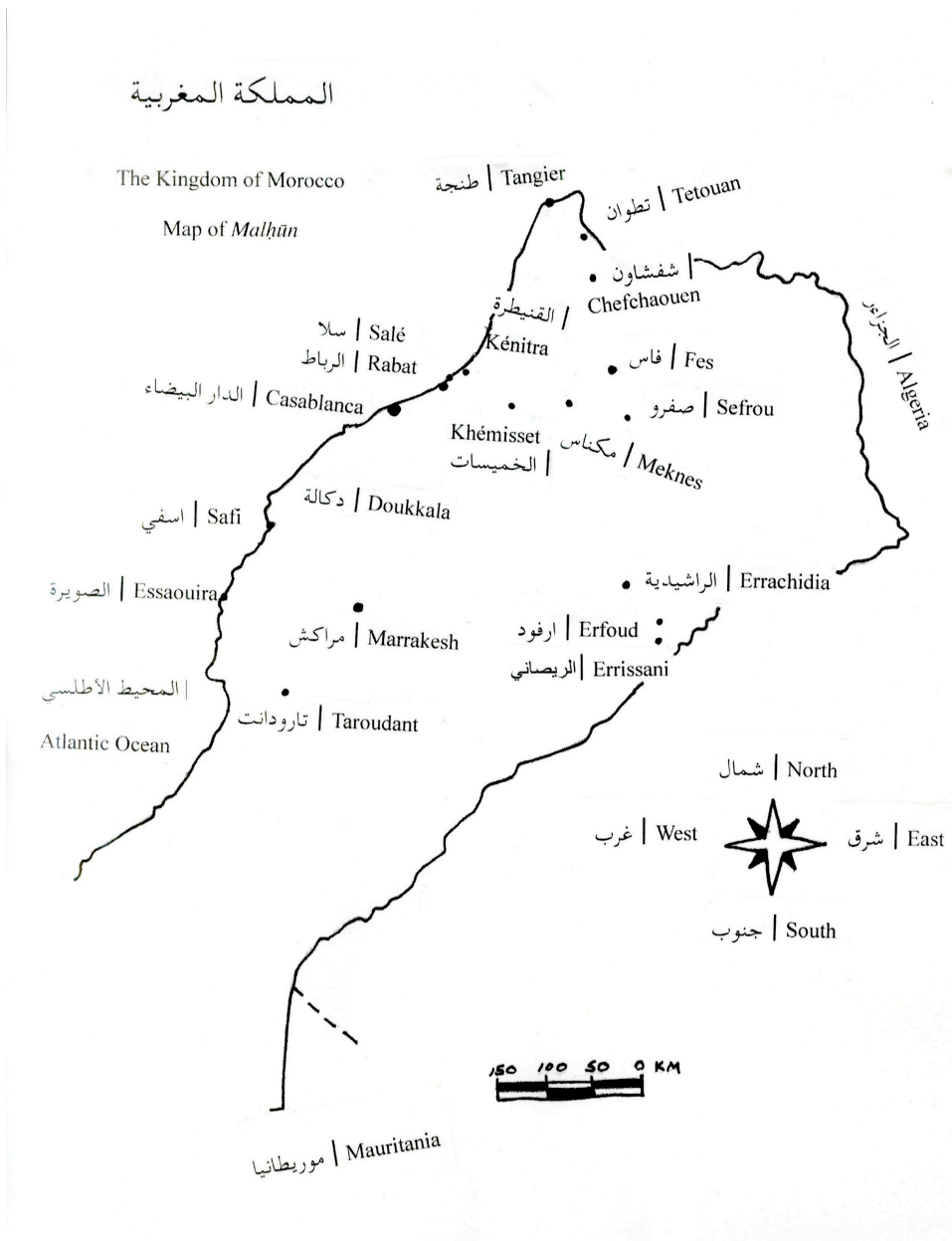
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Supervisor: Samer Ali

This dissertation investigates *malhūn* poetry and its roles in contemporary Moroccan society. It challenges modernist approaches to *malhūn* that focus on structures and overlook functions, contingencies and interdependencies. I propose an approach informed by performance studies and Bakhtinian dialogism. This study relies on three types of primary sources: printed collections, oral performances, and interviews. Oral and written examples of *malhūn* range across the past five hundred years. However, this study places priority on the various actors involved in *malhūn* today: poets, singers, musicians, editors, scholars, politicians and fans. This dissertation demonstrates how the heteroglossia of *malhūn* performances affects Moroccans as they negotiate identities and re-imagine Moroccan society. Performers' poetic devices and interpretations of the genre facilitate a process of representing and "voicing" social groups within contemporary Moroccan public discourse. I specifically address voices of stability that reinforce social structures of authority ("centripetal") and voices of diversification ("centrifugal") that re-envision diversity in Moroccan society. Artistic innovations, such as theatrical productions of a narrative *malhūn* poem, make space for rethinking Moroccan identity. I argue that *malhūn* poetry functions dialogically in contemporary public discourse to provide a space for Moroccans to negotiate social identities. This dissertation demonstrates how one cultural genre forms social identity, engaging contemporary theory and debates of issues ranging from performance and identity to heritage and social effects of art and literature.

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Map prepared by author.

INTRODUCTION

Malhūn is a North African genre of sung poetry composed in a vernacular. It is so bound up with both music and with colloquial uses of Arabic that there are unresolved debates about whether the word itself refers more to the musical aspect of the tradition (from *lahn*, meaning 'tune') or to its non-standard language (from *laḥana*, meaning 'to make grammatical mistakes').¹ The genre adds a dialogic strand to the Moroccan context of global cultural production.

Starting in 1994, the annual Fes Festival of Sacred Music grew into The World Sacred Music Festival, with partner festivals occurring regularly in Los Angeles and other cities worldwide.² It is likely the highest profile festival in Morocco, in terms of the thousands of attendees and its appeal to a global audience of multifaith and non-sectarian spiritual pilgrims and tourists.³ The 2011 festival included a single outdoor concert

1. The late Mohamed El-Fasi advocated for the former option, and Abbès Jirari took the latter position, pointing out that grammarians had been using the term to refer to colloquial language since the eighth century. El-Fasi (1986): 100-101. Jirari (1970): 55 ff. For more on *lahn* to designate colloquial Arabic, Sanni (2010). I suggest that the term *malhūn* came to dominate Moroccan discussions of sung poetry precisely because it allows for multiple constructions.

2. *Mahrajān Fās li-l-musīqā ar-rūḥiyya* / Le Festival de Fès des Musique Sacrées du Monde. The current event website is available at the time of writing as follows: <http://www.fesfestival.com/2013/>

3. For further details, including ethnographic observations and a scholarly analysis, Kapchan (2008).

dedicated to Moroccan *malḥūn*. Since it was one of the events open to the general public, no tickets were required and the audience was a sea of hundreds of Moroccans standing in one of the historic city squares outside the Bab Boujloud old city gate. Most non-Moroccans were located in a fenced space closest to the stage with press passes and armed Moroccan guards to maintain separation between the general audience and VIP guests. I attended in the company of Amani and her father, as well as another member of their family and my husband.⁴ We stood at the front of the general audience section. Amani and I photographed and recorded the scene: the musicians' creativity, singers' talent, and audience members' laughing and dancing--women, men and children from elderly to babes-in-arms--blue jeans next to *jellaba* robes. The audience seemed to represent the diversity in Moroccan society: a person who prays, a person who smokes, a person who votes, a person who takes bribes, a person who wears a bikini, a person who maintains one wife in Spain and one wife in Morocco, a person who struggles to earn enough to pay for minimal rations. During the popular song *Al-Burāqiyya*, a sort of mosh pit formed to our left where several girls in headscarves laughed and danced together at the song that praised the prophet Muhammad. This diversity of religiosity and worldviews represents the first of three kinds of difference that I observed in this event.

Amani recognized about half the songs, and for the other half we could refer to her father for confirmation or correction of my guesses. He sang along to the songs, and enjoyed sharing his knowledge with me and his daughter. As a long-time fan (*hāwī*), he had instilled an appreciation for the genre in his daughter from an early age. They enjoy attending *malḥūn* performances together. I met them initially because I saw a young woman taking so many photos at an earlier event that I introduced myself and asked her

4. 22 June 2011, Fes. Pseudonym.

if she was a reporter.⁵ Their relationship represents how *malḥūn* can reinforce bonds of kinship and community, linking Moroccans across generations and genders in families, *malḥūn* associations, classes in musical conservatories, passengers in taxis, and so on. Generational difference provides the second of three kinds of difference bridged by this *malḥūn* performance.

The third kind of difference occurs through fusion, the combination of artistic styles from different regions. The director of the Fes Festival of Sacred Music *malḥūn* concert was Mohammed Soussi, and he devised two special fusion songs to debut at this concert. Each song combined *malḥūn* poems with musical characteristics of other traditions: *jiblī*, from the northern mountains, and *gnāwa*, a tradition formed by sub-Saharan percussion and trance ceremonies. The concert opened with the poem *Zāwignā f-ḥmāk* / We take refuge in your protection, performed in *jiblī* style (from a mountainous region in northern Morocco).⁶

Translation by Schuyler: ⁷	Arabic Text of Refrain:
We take refuge in your protection; be generous, O Taha, Light of Guidance. O Sea of Greatness and Favor, O Messenger of Allah	زاوكننا فحماك جود يا محمد يا طه يا بحر التعظيم والفضل يا رسول الله

5. 11 June 2011, spring picnic in Fes.

6. At the time of this writing, it is available online: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r5LsD0Wg660>. The text was composed by ‘Abd al-Hādī Bennānī (d. 1925) of Fes. Text provided in Rabat conservatory curriculum.

7. Schuyler (1974): 168.

Later, we heard *Al-Lutfiyya* in Gnawi style, with the following refrain:

Translation:	Arabic Text: ⁸
O invisible kindness of God Show us kindness in that which God ordains	يا لطف الله الخافي لطف بنا فيما جرات به القدار

He presented each song as an original way of performing *malhūn*, and the audience received both songs with particular pleasure at the innovative approach to tradition. The combination of lyrics that are associated with particular times and places, on the one hand, with sounds that are associated with other times and places, on the other hand, was very effective at broadening the potential audience and making *malhūn* a more global tradition. For example, if a family attended this concert with family members or friends who represented the region of Tafilalt and the northern mountainous region, then both groups would be able to share in the genre. This would exceed audience expectations since the genre of *malhūn* is traditionally associated with a limited set of geographical spaces and musical instruments and techniques. Fusion breaks the boundaries of the traditional genre, challenging people to rethink its meaning and its potential. It represents the potential for *malhūn* to link Moroccans across boundaries of region, language, and ethnicity. Individuals and groups perform *malhūn* in a variety of contexts, from daily

8. The text of *Al-Lutfiyya* was composed by a weaver and poet of Fes, Ahmed El Grabli, in the nineteenth century. For Arabic text and French translation, see Guessous (2008): 216-225. For information on gnawa (Fr. gnaoua) style, Kapchan (2007).

speech to annual festivals, invoking tradition to express aspects of social identity. This dissertation explains how Moroccans interpret and deploy *malḥūn* for the endless re-construction of Moroccan identity.

French Arabist Charles Pellat's 1987 article in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam* is the primary reference work on *malḥūn* in English. It provides a modernist / structuralist reading of the genre, focusing on structures and overlooking functions, contingencies, and interdependencies. Pellat defines *malḥūn* by etymology and then as a form "of popular poetry in dialect...[comprising] strophic poems...[characterized by] the tendency to use an internal rhyme, the first hemistichs of all the lines rhyming throughout the poem or in each of the strophes."⁹ He locates this poetic form in North Africa, and proceeds to provide details under the following sections: origins, principal poets (from the sixteenth to twentieth centuries), subjects, transmission and preservation, language, metrics, and structure and forms. One limitation of Pellat's perspective is its reliance on French language sources, as he acknowledges in one case: "...it is probable that the events which took place in Algeria from 1954 to 1962 have given rise to a certain form of heroic poetry, but the author of the present article only possesses in this connection some works of poets writing in French."¹⁰

Modernism and structuralism constrain Pellat's analysis, foreclosing issues of function and performance that I address. For example, cultural forms such as *malḥūn* parallel cultural identity in its multiple and emergent manifestations. Pellat presents

9. Pellat (1987): 247.

10. Pellat (1987): 252.

malḥūn as common to Morocco, Algeria, Libya, and Tunisia, although he admits that there is more information for the form in Morocco and Algeria.¹¹ However far *malḥūn* might have traveled historically, in contemporary Morocco, *malḥūn* is perceived as a national genre representing the nation's greatest pre-modern creative literature. Hopefully future research will compare *malḥūn* in Morocco to *malḥūn* in Algeria.¹² Prior to the establishment of national borders, Morocco and Algeria shared in a common genre of *malḥūn* and the culture of which it was a part. However, with the division of the two nation states, conceptions of *malḥūn* reflect and shape conceptions of national identity. Pellat's article treats *malḥūn* as a shared genre without recognizing how it has developed in dialogue with identity in any specific national context, but understanding *malḥūn* in Morocco requires the ability to view it as a Moroccan genre because it is perceived as such.¹³

My performance studies approach engages contemporary debates of emerging structures, multiple functions, and shifting and hybrid identities. I draw on Bakhtin's

11. Pellat (1987): 247.

12. Pellat's expertise is clearly focused primarily on Algerian contexts, as demonstrated in the "three theses on this subject" that he supervised and lists, and in references that seem completely inaccurate for Moroccan contexts. Pellat (1987): 253. For example, "Opposition to the French penetration is manifested directly in some poems which the *meddāḥs* claim in public." Pellat (1987): 252. The term *meddāḥ*, and this practice of public declamation, seem outdated and/or specific to Algerian contexts.

13. "In the present article, we will not neglect Tripolitania, and we will concern ourselves with Tunisia...but more particularly with Morocco and Algeria..." Pellat (1987):248.

dialogic criticism in order to analyze the emergent and hybrid nature of *malhūn*, as it gives voice to multiple sectors of Moroccan society.

Most importantly, for the purposes of the present study, Pellat relies on absolutist and objectivist perspectives on culture that my study counters: "Aware of the interest that popular poetry presents as an authentic element of the national patrimony, an eloquent representative of the personality of a country and evidence of a sensibility which cannot always be expressed in classical Arabic..."¹⁴ The idea of national patrimony emerged with modern nation states and their search for legitimacy through authentic national heritage, including items such as literary works or art styles. Pellat implies that verbal art in spoken language varieties convey the essence of a culture more effectively than standardized, written language varieties. His approach leads to essentialism in terms of set nations, each with its specific national character and cultural claims. My approach, in contrast, notes nationalist structures and identities as one of many constructs that provide meaning to social life. Pellat's article thus reflects an essentialist discourse of nationalism and the role of oral literature in legitimating modern nation states.¹⁵ His methods tend toward

14. Pellat (1987): 253.

15. I draw on postmodern thought here to critique essentialism. See for instance Judith Butler's *Gender Trouble* (1990) that posits "performative" identity against essentialist notions of identity. For discourse, I draw on the following definition: "[a complex] of signs and practices which organize[s] social existence and social reproduction. In their structured, material persistence, discourses are what give differential substance to membership in a social group or class or formation, which mediate internal sense of belonging, and outward sense of otherness." Richard Terdiman (1985): 54.

formalism without recognition of performance and the role of art in society.¹⁶ In contrast, my study uses performance-based approaches in order to show the genre's contingent character and adaptability. Pellat's article focuses on origins, etymology, and verse structures, at the expense of literary or social functions and significance. My approach allows for the emergence of *malhūn* in various performances, attending to the agency of performers and the interaction between all those present in performances, and recognizing the roles that performances play in society.

My theoretical approach draws on post-structuralist theories. Mikhail Bakhtin's work, particularly *The Dialogic Imagination*, guides my analysis of *malhūn* as a cultural form, distinguished by its stylistics that exposes multiple voices in Moroccan society.¹⁷ "Genre stylistics" comprise both "private craftsmanship" and "the social life of discourse."¹⁸ Whether by individual intention or by more complex processes, the

16. As Hanks concludes, "Typology cannot explain the shape of the text in any instance...nor its social effectiveness. For these, one must look to performance." Hanks (1984): 153. Earlier, he discusses the distinction made by Volosinov between "abstract objectivism" and "individual subjectivism." I take both perspectives into account, noting normative structures and analyzing their relationship to individual experience. Hanks restates Volosinov's point in Saussurian terms: "the structure of *langue*, to the extent that it exists, derives entirely from *parole*." Hanks (1984): 132.

17. I also follow in the steps of many who adapt Bakhtin's analysis for genres other than the novel, as his work is historically situated in the modernist focus on the singularity of novels as a new and distinctive genre. For example, see Mary Ellen Brown, ed. (1990) *Television and Women's Culture: The Politics of the Popular*, Sydney: Currency Press.

activation of symbolic associations with particular social groups accounts in large part for the success and presence of *malhūn* in contemporary Moroccan society. Bakhtin discusses instances of language, 'utterances,' and how they relate to one another to add to larger varieties of language that form social voices. Bakhtin identifies two forces at work in society. The centripetal force produces official, unifying language and "a system of linguistic norms."¹⁹ In contrast, centrifugal forces push for decentralization and disunification:

...stratification and heteroglossia widen and deepen as long as language is alive and developing. Alongside the centripetal forces, the centrifugal forces of language carry on their uninterrupted work; alongside verbal-ideological centralization and unification, the uninterrupted processes of decentralization and disunification go forward.²⁰

The categories of centripetal and centrifugal also "are themselves subject to the centrifuge," and the line between them is not always clear-cut.²¹

18. Bakhtin (1981): 259.

19. Bakhtin (1981): 270. This force also represents "unity, homogeneity, centrality." Baxter (2004): 114.

20. Bakhtin (1981): 272. He elaborates that even a single word can have multiple associations ("internal dialogism of the word") on page 279. This force also represents "difference, dispersion, decentering." Baxter (2004): 114. Some characterize the two forces as "official" and "unofficial": "The former seek to impose order on an essentially heterogeneous and messy world; the latter either purposefully or *for no particular reason* continually disrupt that order." Morson and Emerson (1990): 30.

These complementary forces intersect in "the utterance."²² That is to say that a *malhūn* love poem performed in the course of a musical at the National Theater can engage progressive viewers who support public expressions of affection and individual freedoms, and can simultaneously appeal to more conservative viewers who appreciate the song's historical and cultural weight. Such a performance makes the given poem part of multiple social groups, and also part of Moroccan national culture. For Bakhtin, every utterance is "a contradiction-ridden, tension-filled unity of two [or multiple] embattled tendencies in the life of language."²³

Bakhtin's concept of "heteroglossia" enters this dissertation as the product of normative structures and innovation. While normativity expresses "official" forces, innovation expresses the "unofficial." At the intersection of these tendencies in art, heteroglossia forms as the interaction of multiple voices and lasting social tensions that are neither clearly resolved nor mutually exclusive: "Every concrete utterance of a speaking subject serves as a point where centrifugal as well as centripetal forces are brought to bear. The processes of centralization and decentralization, of unification and disunification, intersect in the utterance."²⁴ For Bakhtin, the social world is "centripetal-centrifugal flux," and "the centripetal-centrifugal dialectic is a dynamic, fluid, and ongoing process whose particular shape varies chronotopically, or contextually."²⁵ In the

21. Morson and Emerson (1990): 30.

22. Bakhtin (1981): 272.

23. Bakhtin (1981): 272.

24. Baxter (2004): 114.

25. Baxter (2004): 114.

case of *malḥūn*, sub-genres and their specific social contexts give shape to the centripetal-centrifugal dialectic.

I also stand on the shoulders of many scholars, including the approaches of the following: Ruth Finnegan and John Miles Foley on oral poetry from comparative perspectives;²⁶ Jane Tompkins, Janice Radway, and Stanley Fish on reception studies;²⁷ Joyce Coleman and Ruth Crosby and on the interplay of literary technologies historically;²⁸ Deborah Kapchan and Susan Slyomovics on performance in contemporary North Africa;²⁹ and my adviser, Samer Ali, on performance in Arabic literary and cultural history.

My methods include fieldwork and contemporary theory in order to avoid pitfalls of essentialism and the focus on history that informed earlier studies. This study relies on three types of primary sources: printed collections, oral performances, and interviews.³⁰ Oral and written examples of *malḥūn* range across the past five hundred years. However, this study places priority on the various actors involved in *malḥūn* today: poets, singers, musicians, editors, scholars, politicians and fans. This focus on people contrasts with Pellat's focus on form. Conducting interviews and ethnographic fieldwork, I have gained

26. Finnegan (1988). Foley (1996).

27. Fish (1982); Tompkins (1981); Radway (1991).

28. Coleman (1996); Crosby (1936).

29. Kapchan (1996); Slyomovics (2005); Ali (2008).

30. I also conducted some research at archives, but I do not use manuscripts as a major source of evidence in this study.

cues and clues for the interpretation of *malhūn* poetry. In 2008, I spent July gathering material in Rabat for background research: poetry collections, recordings, and studies. I continued preliminary investigations in June - July 2009 and December 2009 - January 2010, and fieldwork during the period November 2010 - August 2011. Thus this study focuses on Moroccan society in 2011, though my observations are informed by experience in the region for a cumulative period of almost two years throughout more than a decade, including January-May 2001, December 2003-January 2004, and April 2006. Fieldwork is essential to my study because I seek to understand the role of art in society and its importance to individuals.³¹

My research consisted of basic archival investigations, extensive personal interviews, and general ethnographic observations. I attended *malhūn* classes twice per week at the Moulay Rachid conservatory (*Ma'had Mūlay Rashīd*) in the old city (*mdīna*) of Rabat, from January to June 2011. This was essentially the spring term, corresponding to the academic year since most of the students attend the conservatory after the regular school day. I also visited classes at the Salé conservatory.

Regular events of note for *malhūn* enthusiasts include: the Fes Festival of *Malhūn* during or near April, the Sijlmasa *malhūn* festival at the end of May, the Fes Festival of Sacred Music during or near June, the Moussem (Ar. *mūsīm*) of Moulay Idriss al-Zarhoun in or near mid-July, and cultural festivals such as that of Asilah (*Mūsīm Aṣṭla al-thaqāfī al-dawlī* / Moussem Culturel International d'Assilah) in or near late-July. Other

31. My reasoning here follows in the footsteps of performance studies scholars who have discussed the difficulties of presenting a "native point of view" and the need to take into account diverse informants' perspectives and to consider "natives" as partners in learning and in producing knowledge. Bauman and Briggs (1990): 61.

events include weekly practice sessions, *takrīm* / *hommage* / tribute concerts in honor of a *malḥūn* master, academic conferences, daily informal meetings in a café, special occasion wedding festivities, or concerts to celebrate the anniversary of a local organization or to mark a national holiday. *Nzāhāt* (sg. *nuzha* or *nzaaha*) are springtime celebrations that include picnics and musical performances. They take place in the regions of Fes, Meknes, and Marrakesh, and allow urban residents a refreshing novelty from city life. Historically, these spring picnics overlapped with religious celebrations, whether Mimouna (concluding Passover in areas with Jewish residents) or various *mwāsim* (saints' celebrations, sg. *mūsīm*). Today local associations usually host these picnics, often providing scrumptious meals. As technology has developed, the musical setup has become more complex, and may involve stages and speakers. With the expenses of sound equipment and complete meals, these events may acquire a certain exclusivity, making *malḥūn* performances vehicles for social capital. In addition to events dedicated to *malḥūn*, my observations include performances of *malḥūn* in popular culture and media (films, television programs, radio broadcasts, live plays).

I propose a dialogic theory of culture in Morocco in which culture is "both a type of processes and the products of such processes."³² *Malḥūn* forms a space for the process that I call voicing, expressing an intersubjective social voice. At the same time, Moroccans tend to perceive *malḥūn* as one or more products of this process: a voice of unification, a voice of continuity, and so on. My analysis reveals other voices such as voices of diversification and change, and it provides a framework for understanding the hybridity of culture in Morocco through the lens of *malḥūn*. From this dialogic

32. Bostad, Brandist, Evensen, and Faber (2004): 2.

perspective, *malhūn* functions through voicing to produce ever-emergent meanings according to particular performance contexts, "integrating aspects of both the immediate and the historical social contexts of performance."³³

Malhūn is much more than merely a folk tradition, in the common understanding of "The traditional beliefs, legends, and customs, current among the common people [and] the study of these."³⁴ Performers do not only remember a past; they also construct, deconstruct, re-construct, and negotiate many potential pasts and ideas regarding those pasts, for specific social purposes. These purposes form a spectrum of positions such as politically conservative or socially liberal, and they represent a multitude of voices: business people advocating profitable mergers, leaders seeking to legitimate authority, regions competing for status, and so on. Moroccans express these views through *malhūn* by referencing key moments that are specific to Moroccan national history, for instance the medieval period, the pre-protectorate period, the protectorate period, national independence of 1956, and so forth. The poetry performed then shapes such historical narratives. Performances of *malhūn* perpetually reinvent Moroccan culture, reflecting negotiations of identity. *Malhūn* emerges from this study as a literary and cultural form that informs public discourses regarding the nature of Moroccan identity.

33. Bostad, Brandist, Evensen, and Faber (2004): 2.

34. Source: "folklore, n.". OED Online. March 2013. Oxford University Press. <http://www.oed.com.ezproxy.lib.utexas.edu/view/Entry/72546?redirectedFrom=folklore> (accessed May 28, 2013). It traces the term to several mid-nineteenth century texts.

Malhūn texts usually occur as song. Fans and researchers refer to written and printed copies of texts, but most Moroccans encounter this poetry aurally. In the attached video, singer Driss Zaarouri opens his performance with the first two stanzas of the poem *Yāmna*.³⁵ The first three stanzas are a lover's complaint, imploring the beloved to visit and relieve the lover's suffering. Zaarouri skips the third stanza altogether since it continues in the same theme as the earlier stanzas. He sits in a practice session in Meknes, sharing his talent with apparent enjoyment, using modulation and drawing out syllables. He performs in community, sitting in a circle with students and fans, many of whom repeat lines of the poem in a call-and-response fashion. In the poem, the lover sees the beloved at night in dreams, and considers himself like a slave, dependent upon the whims of his beloved. These stanzas' imagery resembles that of poems such as *Mā zīn wṣūlk* / How Delightful Your Arrival Would Be, *Irfaq a-mālkī* / Be Kind, My Lady, and *Al-kāwī* / The

35. 17 May 2011, Meknes. Driss Zaarouri performed this song especially for me because it includes the *higāz* melody to which I am partial. As part of this self-conscious performance, the singer includes a *sarrāba* / introduction to set up his presentation. He sings from memory. The poet Al-Maṣmūdī lived in late-sixteenth to early-seventeenth century Tafilalt (during the reign of sultan Moulay Zaydan al-Saadi), and composed love poetry with a notable innovation. The motif of correspondence is first attributed to him for this poem, in which the lover poet is rejected by his beloved. Later, he sends a letter to her by messenger. Having had time to consider, and won over by the letter (which she reads), she sends news of returned love with the messenger. Later poets draw on the messenger motif, developing *al-warshān*, a messenger bird. For biographical information, see Jirari (1970): 592-595; El-Fasi (1992): 256-257. For poem text, see Guessous (2008): 28; Chakroun (2001): 13-19, El-Fasi (1997): 125.

Burned One.³⁶ Each stanza ends by repeating the following refrain, and a musical interlude:

Translation:	Arabic Text: ³⁷
Tell Yamna, the little Ottoman crescent moon Mina, O Mina, God's protection be with you	قولو ليامنة تهليل العثماني مينة يا مينة معاك شرع الله

The fourth stanza develops the lover's complaint into a personal account:

Translation:	Arabic Text: ³⁸
I sent the gazelle my letter My messenger went and she dazzled him He read to her the letters of my verses, and She folded the writing and threw it away	صفطت للغزال براتي مرسولي مشى وسباته وقراها حروف بياتي طوات لكتاب رماته

The fifth and penultimate stanza shows the poet's response:

Translation:	Arabic Text: ³⁹
At that point, I said: Messenger, Stop bawling and return to her	في الحين قلت يا مرسولي ترك النواح ورجع لها

36. Full texts and translations in Appendix IV.

37. Transliteration: *Qūlū li-Yāmna tahlīl l-'utmānī Mīna yā Mīna m'āk shar' allāh.*

Composed by Muḥammad al-Maṣmūdī in the seventeenth century. El-Fasi (1997): 125.

38. El-Fasi (1997): 125.

39. El-Fasi (1997): 126.

The messenger returns to the home of the beloved a second time, and finds her:

Translation:	Arabic Text: ⁴⁰
Crying from her heart, tears streaming, My letter open in her hand, as she read it	بالقلب باكية ودموع الطوفاني وكتابي محلول في يدها تقرأه

The final stanza ends thus:

Translation:	Arabic Text: ⁴¹
The lady resumed her place, My heart achieved its aim after separation O Memorizer of the Poem, list to the Wazzani, Al-Masmudi. His hope is in the realm of the Generous. Pray, O lovers, upon the Medinan, Crown of light, Father of Fatima, Messenger of God	وفات لالة في عهدا تاني قلبي من بعد الصدود صاب مناه يا حافظ القصيدة وسغي الوزاني المصمودي في الكريم دار رجاه صليو يا العشاق على المداني تاج النور بو فاطمة رسول الله

Singer Abdelawi takes the opportunity to sing in the conclusion, repeating the refrain after the end of the song. Zaarouri has the last word with a finale that extends the last notes on long vowels.

40. El-Fasi (1997): 126.

41. El-Fasi (1997): 126.

Malḥūn is sung poetry and needs no accompaniment beyond keeping time. However, audiences and performers agree that instruments enrich *malḥūn* performances.⁴² A *qṣīda* / poem is known by a title (for example, *Al-Ḥarrāz*, especially if it is a variation on a common topic) or by its opening line, which is termed *al-dukhūl* or *l-maṭlaʿ* / the entrance. The genre consists of several sub-genres that may define a given listener's understanding of *malḥūn*.⁴³ Unlike genres such as the poly-thematic *qaṣīda* or ode, the body of a *malḥūn* poem (termed *qṣīda*) generally has only one main topic.⁴⁴

42. In a class at the musical conservatory, students clap or use *taʿrījas* to keep time. A *taʿrīja* is a hand-held, hour-glass shaped clay drum with a piece of animal hide stretched across one end. In public events, musical ensembles (*jawq*, pl. *ajwāq*) may include ten or twenty members, and their instruments usually include drums and stringed instruments (*ʿūd* / lute, *rabāb* / fiddle, *kamānja* / violin). Whereas the *ʿūd* (or *āla*) became the representative instrument of Andalusian music, the *swīsen* /small plucked lute became the premier instrument of *malḥūn*. Thanks to Philip Schuyler for the translation of the latter.

43. A given listener may equate the entire genre of *malḥūn* with one or two sub-genres, depending upon his or her personal experience. For example, a Rabat bookshop owner told me that *malḥūn* is essentially Sufi music. For others, *malḥūn* is love poetry.

44. Odes are among the first examples of Arabic literature in the sixth century, and the genre spread with the geographical expansion of Arabic culture. They are known for a structure comprised of three thematic movements: *nasīb* (remembrance), *raḥīl* (journey), and any of several sub-genres such as *fakhr* (boast). For information on the classical *qaṣīda*, see Ali (2008): 88.

Topics in poetry have broadened over the centuries, so that contemporary *malḥūn* includes several sub-genres: *madḥ* / praise, and its inverse, *hijā'* / invective; lyric poetry on wine, love, and nature; laments; political appeals; and narratives.⁴⁵ In addition, religious themes form the most performed and studied category, whether because of spiritual value or because they are relatively safe topics.⁴⁶ Of all these sub-genres, some correspond to those found in classical Arabic poetry: panegyric poetry praising a patron, poetry praising a beloved, the recounting of a journey, the description of nature and especially of spring, the celebration of wine drinking and all it may involve, the verbal competition between two interlocutors representing two sides of a debate, and mystical poems praising the prophet Muḥammad or other religious figures. Other functions seem specific to *malḥūn* as it developed in Morocco: poems of greeting to distant colleagues or loved ones, and poems of meditation upon objects such as a candle or tea tray for example.

The genre of *malḥūn* contains hundreds of poems, and so one can certainly identify normative structures. However, these structures are also "embedded in individual and intersubjective experience."⁴⁷ This dissertation will treat both structures and functions

45. There is no single consensus on a set of sub-genres. One typology identifies ten topics in *malḥūn* poetry: 1) *tawassul* / supplication, 2) *madḥ nabawwī* / praise of the prophet, 3) *waṣīyya dīniyya* / religious advice, 4) *waṣīyya ijtīmā'iyya* / social advice, 5) *rabī'ī* / spring, 6) *‘aššāqī* / love, 7) *tarjama* / narrative, 8) *mu‘āraḍa* / contest, 9) *hijā'* / invective, 10) *rithā'* / elegy. Souhoum (1993): 67

46. For the latter, see Waugh (2005): 100.

47. Hanks (1984): 131.

of *malḥūn*, from full poems to performances that stylistically evoke *malḥūn* poetry. Moroccans construct *malḥūn* historically as a regional genre that became national.⁴⁸ From one of many regional traditions, *malḥūn* started as a local art in Tafilalt by the fifteenth century, and circulated into circles of urban artists, craftspeople, and Sufi groups by the sixteenth century, thus distinguishing itself from all other Moroccan regional traditions.⁴⁹ By the seventeenth century, distinct regional sub-traditions of *malḥūn* formed, concentrated in population centers.⁵⁰ By the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, *malḥūn* began to reflect the country's increased unification, and came to represent Arab pride and resistance to foreign domination (Ottoman, French, Spanish, and British).⁵¹ *Malḥūn*

48. The term *malḥūn* became more specific with time.

49. Fifteenth century poets include the following. ‘Abd Allāh b. Ḥsāyn of Tafilalt (c. 1410 - c. 1504). Only two of his poems remain to us: one drawing on the traditional Islamic education of the *kuttāb* (primary school), and the other a poem of wisdom called *al-luqmānīya*. Jirari (1970): 562-567. His student, Ḥmād al-Ḥamarī, was known for his poem *Al-Rabī‘īya* / Spring Poem. Jirari (1970): 567-570. Muḥammad b. ‘Alī b. ‘Amr was also a student of ‘Abd Allāh b. Ḥsāyn in Tafilalt. He gained a controversial reputation due to a series of scandals surrounding his *ghazl* / love poetry. Jirari (1970): 570-578. Jirari, El-Fasi, Guessous and others have written about later poets. There is clearly a geographical shift as poets and their art traveled out of Tafilalt to other cultural centers.

50. al-Gansānī (1993): 14.

51. Evidence of this claim lies in poems of the time, such as: *Al-maṣrīya* / The Egyptian One, by Muḥammad b. ‘Alī al-‘Umrānī of Fes (from a Tafilalt family, d. 1822). Jirari (1970): 620-625; Guessous (2008): 306. This political poem expresses Moroccan

played several roles at the national level in the twentieth century, from a discourse of nationalism during the Protectorate years, to a discourse of Arabization following independence, to a symbol of protest following the international youth movements of the sixties.⁵² In the twenty-first century, *malhūn* is a folk genre that is supposed to put Moroccan society in touch with its roots and authenticity. It has expanded into a transcultural form that dialogically incorporates differences between ideologies, political platforms, and worldviews.

From the ethnographic literature on North Africa, it is clear that sung poetry traditions exist in every country. It seems to me that each country has several rural varieties, which correspond to geographical regions. In addition, through processes of

solidarity with Egypt, in sympathy with those who suffered from Napoleon's invasion in 1798. It represents perhaps the earliest moment in Moroccan literature that expresses solidarity with other Arab countries. Also, Muhammad ibn ‘Abūd of the late nineteenth century composed poetry of resistance to colonial domination. Chakroun (2009): 79-89.

52. For nationalism, see *Al-Jihād / The Effort* by Muhammed b. al-Hasan al-Slaawii about the invasion of his native Rabat-Salé on 28 October 1860. Guessous (2008): 348-359; El-Fasi (1990): 73. Another example is l-Ḥājj Muḥammad al-‘Awfīr (d. 1971) who performed the poem *Thawrat al-malak wal-sha‘b / The Revolution of the King and the People*, in the late sixties in commemoration of the popular king Muhammad V who was exiled during the French Protectorate. Jirari, *Al-Zajal fī l-Maghrib*, 678-679. For Arabization, the evidence is in the language. When educated Moroccans use Arabic instead of French in post-colonial Morocco, it can have social and political significance. For the youth movement, see especially Chapter Four.

modernization and nationalism, many countries united around one or two dominant genres of sung poetry. Egypt is an exception, as it developed a flourishing literary culture of novels, short stories, and criticism, alongside colloquial poetry from about 1920.⁵³ The nations of Tunisia and Libya claim *ma'lūf* as cultural heritage.⁵⁴ In Algeria and Morocco, there are two dominant genres of sung poetry: *andalusī* (called *al-Āla l-Andalusī* in Morocco) and *malḥūn*. The former features a register of formal Arabic, distinguished by *i'rāb* ('case endings,' 'case and mood markings,' or 'desentential inflection').⁵⁵ The latter

53. The publication of Muhammad Haykal's *Zaynab* was an important landmark that many consider the first Egyptian novel. Short stories and novels of Morocco appear in the 1940s, with significant developments in the 1960s and 1970s. See "Egypt, modern" by Paul Starkey and "Morocco" by F. Abu-Haidar in the 1998 *Encyclopedia of Arabic Literature*, ed. Julie Scott Meisami and Paul Starkey, London; New York: Routledge.

54. *Mālūf* (or, more formally, *ma'lūf*) incorporates multiple linguistic registers, depending on the performance context. Brief texts characterized by colloquial language may be introduced near the end of a *nūba* / suite. These texts are called *zajal*, not *malḥūn*, and there is no claim that *malḥūn* originated in Tunisia. For further information on *mālūf* in Tunisia, see the work of Ruth Davis and Alyson Jones. For Libya, see Philip Ciantar's *The Ma'luf in Contemporary Libya* (2012).

55. To illustrate briefly the meaning of *i'rāb*, consider the following two hypothetical versions of a sample of poetry: 1) *al-mālu zaynata l-dunyā wa-‘izza l-nufūsi*; 2) *l-māl zīnata l-dinyā w-‘izza l-nufūs*. The first version includes *i'rāb*, and any reader may notice discrepancies such as *mālu* versus *māl* or *nufūsi* versus *nufūs*. In addition to these case endings, some words may change pronunciation, such as *zaynata* versus *zīnata* or *dunyā*

draws on various linguistic registers. I will speak to the social implications of this performance strategy in Morocco.

The significance of *malhūn*'s contribution to Moroccan culture, as a common source, becomes clearer when one considers the diversity of the population. Morocco has an approximate population of 30 million people.⁵⁶ Anthropologist Pandolfo reports that “over 60 percent of the population is illiterate--or, to be more precise, is ‘orally literate.’”⁵⁷ *The New York Almanac* lists the following statistics: "Ethnic Groups: 99.1% Arab-Berber, 0.7% non-Moroccan, 0.2% Jewish. Languages: Arabic (official), several Berber dialects; French is language of business, government, diplomacy, and postprimary education. Religions: 98.7% Muslim, 1.1% Christian, 0.2% Jewish."⁵⁸ This population is officially Arab and Muslim, but in daily life it is multilingual and varied in religiosity, as I observed during fieldwork. Like other Muslims, many Moroccans are concerned with perceived tensions between Islam and modernity.⁵⁹ Like other Arabs, Moroccans hold views ranging from pride in Arabic culture and language to preferences for foreign languages (for reading, commerce, medicine, etc.). Unlike some Arabs, Moroccans are a highly diasporic population, in the sense that nearly all families have at least one member

versus *dinyā*.

56. "Morocco." *New York Almanac* (2002): 1437.

57. Pandolfo, *Impasse of Angels*, 351.

58. "Morocco." *New York Almanac* (2002): 1437.

59. I see evidence of this in the titles and headlines in public kiosks on main streets, as well as common topics of conversation in daily life.

working abroad, whether for a short assignment or for life-long immigration.⁶⁰ Morocco takes full advantage of its proximity to Europe for economic, political, and cultural exchange. The Moroccan diaspora tends to maintain ties to Morocco, returning whenever practical, often with the aspiration to ultimately reside in Morocco. This makes for a climate in public discourses that is continually questioning and negotiating national and cultural identity.

This dissertation argues that *malḥūn* poetry functions dialogically in contemporary public discourse in Morocco to provide a space for negotiations of identity among social groups. Chapter One, "The Craft of *Malḥūn*," analyzes several textual features that poets use, to that end, in their compositions: meter, rhyme, intertextuality, verse form, lexicon, figurative language, and the use of Hebrew in Judeo-Arabic texts. Chapter Two, "The Social Life of *Malḥūn*," demonstrates how Moroccans energize the interpretive process that makes *malḥūn* meaningful and marked, and thus effective for voicing in public discourses. The remaining chapters explore the implications of *malḥūn*'s poetic devices and interpretations for the voicing of social groups within contemporary Moroccan public discourse. Chapter Three, "Normative Views and Voices," addresses voices of stability; Chapter Four, "Innovation as Re-Vision," analyzes how *malḥūn* re-envisions diversity in Moroccan society. Chapter Five, "Dialogic Drama," discusses comedy and narrative, and their role in playing out social dramas for the express purpose of dialogue and negotiation.

60. Again, I observed this situation during fieldwork.

Note on Translation:

I have relied on the IJMES Transliteration System since it is used most widely in Arabic literary studies, though I have adapted to avoid ambiguity in letter combinations, underlining th [[no underlining (because it's not standard) -- please use the technique I mentioned earlier.]] for example, pronounced 'th' as in 'THin,' to distinguish it from *th*, pronounced 'th' as in 'caT Hat.' Regarding language varieties, I have tried to take my cue from the sources themselves. Thus my transliteration will reflect spoken language in examples given from fieldwork, and will reflect the standards of written language in other places such as the bibliography. I include French when it is provided by the sources, whether spoken or written. All translations are my own unless otherwise indicated. They stress literary effect, rather than literalism. The aim is an idiomatic literary translation for general audiences.

CHAPTER I. THE CRAFT OF MALHUN

الملحون هو كيفية خياطة الكلام. – ليلي المريني

Malhūn is a way of weaving words. - Laila Lamrini, singer and educator

This chapter approaches *malhūn* from the perspective of poets, those who craft texts and who do not necessarily sing poetry in public. It explores the poet's tool box, the poetic devices that appear in the texts themselves, aside from live performance. This aspect of *malhūn* allows for avid readers of an otherwise oral tradition.⁶¹ Stylistic elements are present both in written texts and in live performances. While written texts tend to reach only a minority of Moroccans, live performances reach the majority of Moroccans. The written tradition of *malhūn* serves as a sort of potential cultural repertoire, a store of knowledge from which performers draw. In this chapter, I discuss how the following characteristics mark the formal discourse of *malhūn*: meter, rhyme, intertextuality, verse form, lexicon, figurative language, and the use of Hebrew in Judeo-Arabic texts. Together these devices enable poets to employ the verbal art of *malhūn*, balancing normative structures with innovation in order to express heteroglossic voices in public discourse.

It is no coincidence that classical writers tended to emphasize meter as a determining factor of genres. For Stewart, "meter is the evidence of intended care and so evidence of human countenance."⁶² Drawing on meter, the bond of music and lyric,

61. This study does not analyze the readership of *malhūn* in detail. I discuss it briefly in the Conclusion because I see it as a possible direction for future research.

62. Stewart (2002): 64.

lightens the darkness: "Keeping time, the work of intended care in meter, is a counter to the ceaselessness of all ceaseless things, including the unending silence and darkness with which we began."⁶³ Consider for example the refrain of *Sham'a* / Candle:

Translation:	Transliteration:	Arabic Text: ⁶⁴
By God, O candle, respond to my question: What's with you that you cry through the night, even as you light it up	<i>Li-llāh yā sham'a siltak</i> <i>raddī lī sa'ālī</i> <i>Wāsh bik fil-liyālī</i> <i>mdālkī sha'tlā</i>	لله يا شمعة سلتك ردي لي سألني واش بك فالليالي تبكي مدالكى شعيلاً

The measured language of this refrain and its alternating *qāfiyya* / end rhyme set the structure for the entire poem, its regularity facilitating the expression of questioning and concern, creating a space for sharing emotions and personal narratives.

The Moroccan scholar Abd al-'Azīz bin 'Abd al-Jalīl explains that there have been four basic meters in *malḥūn* poetry ever since it developed thematic categories in the tenth century.⁶⁵ The first meter is *mbīt* / couplets (most commonly two parts, but possibly up to five).⁶⁶ For example, see the first stanza of *Al-Burāqiyya*. Each couplet

63. Stewart (2002): 197.

64. *Sham'a* / Candle by Muḥammad bin 'Alī. Guessous (2008): 306-317.

65. Al-Jalīl (2005): 100.

66. The technical Arabic term for meter is *'urḍ*, pl. *'urūd* or *baḥr*, pl. *buḥūr*, both derived from roots that refer to the vast movements of the sea. However, in Moroccan Arabic,

contains two half-lines (Ar. *shaṭr* / hemistich), the first ending in *-ī* and the second ending in *-ā*. The following excerpt contains three couplets:

Translation:	Transliteration:	Arabic Text: ⁶⁷
I begin with the name of the Majestic, yes the Ever-Living, the Provider	<i>nabda basm l-jlīl na‘m l-ḥay al- rrazāqi</i>	نبدأ باسم الجليل نعم الحي الرزاقِ
I embroider a pure garment	<i>u-nṭarraz l-ma sfaha</i>	ونطرز حلة المي صفاها
And I say to those who understand the language, my eyes teared up	<i>w-nqūl a-fāhim l- lugha ḥallat dam‘ rmāqī</i>	ونقول أفاهم اللغا هلت دمع رماقي
Muḥammad my insides did captivate	<i>Muḥammad jwārḥī sbāhā</i>	محمد جوارحي سباها
Love in the inner regions, my prince caused it to rip	<i>ḥubb f-dwākhī l-ḥsha mazzaq mūr sfāqī</i>	حب في دواخل الحشا مزق مير سفاقي
I have no control over that which he appoints	<i>lā ḥawla lī f-mā qdāhā</i>	لا حول لي فيما قضاها

many people prefer the term *qiyās*, pl. *qiyāsāt*, ‘measure,’ when speaking of meters in colloquial poetry. Through word choice alone, one can speak of *malḥūn* in terms associated with the masterpieces of classical Arabic poetry (thereby equating it with the most prestigious literary traditions in the history of the Arabic language). Alternatively, one can use the more local term, thereby maintaining a sharp distinction between Moroccan colloquial poetry and Arabic classical poetry, whether out of respect to the classical tradition or in support of separatism and Moroccan distinction from greater Arab traditions.

67. *Al-Burāqiyya* by Shaykh Al-Makkī bi-l-Qurshī (d. 1933) of Azemmour. Hand-written text provided by Laila Lamrini.

This meter, *mbīt*, was the norm until a new kind developed. In the second type of meter, *maksūr l-jnāḥ* / Broken of Wing, the basic unit is the stanza, and not the line. The stanza consists of lines of varying length, creating an effect of imbalance, resisting the need for closure that the simpler *mbīt* delivers so predictably. For example, in *Shāyq nzūrak* / Wanting to Visit You, every stanza is preceded by the phrase *qāl ana yā sīdī* / Sir, in order to balance the line, as if healing a broken wing. The third type of meter, *Mšattab*, takes its name from traditional furniture stuffing, and is characterized by "stuffing" that lengthens the stanzas. The fourth type of meter, *sūsī*, is considered relatively free, allowing flexibility. The organization of the stanza can extend the introduction, increasing suspense, before arriving at the refrain. This final innovation suits narratives best because it provides the most flexibility.

Like rhythm and meter, rhyme can also produce effects of regularity and synchronicity. Most poets rely on internal rhyme (between hemistichs) and end rhyme (between lines). For example, in Salsouli's poem *Lāla Burūk* / Lady Buruk, lines alternate in a continuous pattern:⁶⁸

<i>a-lallā Brūk a-Mabrūkā</i>	/	<i>lā dūzī ‘ār w-anā shḥāl nbghūk</i>
<i>qablī-nī nkūn ghlāmāk</i>	/	<i>bil-māl w-l-‘mar nafdūk</i>

68. Hand-written text provided by poet. I find that the word that determines rhyme is often the title and most salient word for meaning.

O Lady Buruk O Mabruka

Do not make a shameful mistake when I love you so much

Accept me as your servant

I would give my wealth and life for you

Both *-ak/-ka* and *-ik* mean 'you' or 'your', and may imply gender ambiguity. Such ambiguity in poetry reflects the emergent nature of meaning. The regular shifting back and forth between phonemes also satisfies the human ear, soothing the senses and delighting those who follow the content and marvel at the poet's ability to follow a rhyme scheme while elaborating on the subject matter. A final example of alternating end rhymes comes from the poem *Tāfilālt* by Ṣādqī 'Abd l-Krīb.⁶⁹

yā l-zāyir Tāfilālt tūf w-nḍar bi-njālak

arḍ l-shrāf l-qawm l-mājdīn min nisbat Ṭā-hā

bīk farḥat Tāfilālt yā l-zāyir f-wṭānak

a-bīk sa'adat l-qulūb al-shāyiqā drkat munā-hā

O visitor to Tafilalt, circumambulate and see with your eyes

The land of the noble, praiseworthy people descended from the Prophet

Tafilalt celebrates you in your country

With you, longing hearts have grown happy and realized their desire

69. Hand-written text provided by singer Abdelali Briki of Erfoud.

Here the refrain and first line demonstrate the a-b-a-b pattern of this poem, with lines alternating between *-ak* and *-hā*. With the exception of the chorus, in which *-hā* refers to the Prophet Muḥammad (or rather his nickname, *Ṭā-hā*), *-hā* usually refers to Tafilalt. Thus the poet's voice switches between addressing the interlocutor, a traveler visiting the region, and "her," the place itself. In live performance, this switch could be accompanied by a visible gesture, such as a sweep of the arm, a smile, or a look around.

While *malḥūn* has become increasingly codified and solidified in Morocco, it retains flexibility. For example, *malḥūn* poems may follow alphabetical order (for the start of each verse, for example) or include acrostics (especially naming the poet). Furthermore, poets can insert several lines between stanzas as marks of innovation. El-Fasi explains that there are two kinds of insertions. The first follows the rules of *mbīt*; it is termed a *swīrḥa* / short ending in Marrakesh, and in Fes it is called *nā'ūra*, pl. *nwā'ir* or *nuw'irāt*.⁷⁰ The second kind of insertion is *'arūbī*, in which each line consists of two hemistichs of ten syllables each, and is a genre that was historically composed independently. This meter results in a music similar to that of womens' *'arūbiyyāt*.⁷¹ The insertion of *'arūbī* into a *malḥūn* poem is like the insertion of *barwīla* into a piece of Andalusī *āla* music because part of the appeal of both techniques is the mixing of genres. These particular examples, like the *kharja* in medieval Andalusian poetry, insert poetry of a less formal style within poetry of a more formal style. Such techniques produce effects of familiarity, frankness, and potentially humor. The combined texts, rhythms, and

70. See El-Fasi, *Ma'lamat al-malḥūn*, 1986: 141.

71. See El-Fasi *Ma'lamat al-malḥūn*, 1986:112-113. For more on women's *'arūbiyyāt*, see El-Fasi, *Rubā'īyyāt nisā' Fās*.

rhymes demonstrate constant innovation. These mini-genres (*‘arūbī*, *nā‘ūra*, *barwīla*, and even the *sarrāba*, which will be described in the next chapter) indicate that what is known as Moroccan *malhūn* today is a hybrid genre that has developed out of multiple historical traditions.

Verse form works hand in hand with meter and rhyme. The normative strophic form consists of a repeating refrain between regulated stanzas. Stanzas (usually five to seven) organize content into manageable chunks, helping with memorization. The last verse is typically longer than the other verses.⁷² Within the final verse, the poet may resolve a problem, conclude a story, or come to terms with a situation. Texts may include opening and closing formulae. Salsouli carefully preserves a traditional format when he transcribes his poems by hand. He opens with a blessing, and provides a title and date, along with his name. He titles each section and usually closes by writing out 'the end,' often using traditional methods of "signature" in the last verse.⁷³

72. Reducing the length of a poem in performance can provoke disapproval, and if a verse is cut, it is generally one of the middle verses. The first and last verses are in this sense accorded more importance, and the refrain is of course the most important and integral ingredient to the poem.

73. The poet often includes his name, like a signature, in the last verse. These include the poet's name, perhaps the date or other contextual information, and possibly using a numerical code specific to *malhūn* artists. The idea of "signature" points to early concepts of authorship, and perhaps agency. In Ottoman Turkish *gazel* poetry, the final (*maqta‘*) line traditionally contains the name of the poet. Pre-modern Persian poetry included a

One innovation to this normative strophic structure is the development of a system of numbers to stand for letters as a code against French colonial detection.⁷⁴ So poets can indicate their names with this numerical code, and may also include the date of composition. For example, consider Salsouli's poem *Ḥubb l-wālidīn* / Love for Parents from 18 February 2008.⁷⁵ It details a child's gratitude and honor for his or her parents, and closes with the following lines:

Translation:	Transliteration:	Arabic Text:
The date emerges [as] ten zero record it 1000 + 400 + 20 + 2 is the year and add to it seven. That completes it with nothing missing.	<i>w-tārīkh ybān</i> <i>‘ashra ṣafar sajlū</i> <i>shatkab l-‘ām zīd lū</i> <i>sab‘a hiyya tkamlū</i> <i>mā fī-hā nuqṣān</i>	والتاريخ يبان عشرة صفر سجلو شتكب العام زيد لو سبعة هي تكملو ما فيها نقصان

signature in the *takhallus*. The element of signature has even been used to imitate Indian poetry in order to question Victorian customs. This poetic convention and its many uses in world literature calls for further study, for it relates to important discussions of agency, authority, authorship, and subjectivity.

74. See the end of Guessous (2008) for an explanatory chart.

75. Source text is hand-written and provided by the poet.

The poet explained these lines to me with evident glee, saying that the letter *shīn* represents one thousand, the letter *tā'* four hundred, the letter *kāf* twenty, the letter *bā'* two. Combining these letters, one gets 1422. Then we add seven, ending up with 1429, which is the date of composition according to the *hijri* calendar. This system ensures the expertise of poets, locating them in a lineage of Moroccan poets who resisted foreign occupation, and also within the community of Muslims who maintain traditions (such as the *hirji* calendar) alongside many other communities worldwide. This entertaining and meaning-making exercise provides *malhūn* experts with a sense of artistic and social agency.

In addition to verse form, *malhūn* style features a lexicon characterized by distinctive words or names, often differing from usage in modern standard Arabic, classical Arabic, and daily speech. The lexicon provides another way of relying on normative elements and innovating as the genre develops. Some poems refer to outdated practices, such as medical practice of cupping (also interpreted as blood-letting or venesection).⁷⁶ Others catalogue items such as birds, flowers, or food.⁷⁷ One poem by Al-Mdaghri has a name that many Moroccans recognize as an old word without knowing its meaning: *Al-Dījūr* / The Darkness.⁷⁸ These bits of information are prized among fans as

76. The Cupper (*Al-Fṣṣāda*) by Muhammad bin Frīḥa, El-Fasi (1990): 315-317. Another version, Mtird (2008): 299.

77. The Feast (*Al-Zarda*) by Mtird lists many dishes, some of them no longer prepared or no longer called by the name that he uses. Mtird (2008): 307.

78. Mdaghrī (2010): 655.

opportunities to share and display their knowledge.⁷⁹ There are a variety of resources available for determining the meaning of unknown words.⁸⁰ Most fans of *malhūn* poetry rely on fellow members of the *malhūn* network for shared knowledge. This expertise holds social capital, at least within the context of this specialized community. Members share texts and recordings of poems, explanations of words and phrases, and biographical information or hagiographic accounts of poets and historical contexts of poems. With the publications of studies and texts, as well as websites dedicated to *malhūn* and other traditional genres, this information is becoming increasingly public and accessible. Yet there remains a strong sense of respect for expertise, and it can be mixed with devotion if the poet or singer specializes in spiritual poetry. The most important aspect of the lexicon is heteroglossia as a mark of artistry. Bakhtin describes how heteroglossia marks literary arts: "The prose artist [or poet, I would argue] elevates the social heteroglossia surrounding objects into an image that has finished contours, an image completely shot

79. The lexicon facilitates a linguistic register that is artistic, highly poetic, and potentially obscure, mixing terms and references. Poems may include idiosyncratic usage or allusions to the Quran or to classical Arabic poetry. Fans take great pleasure in advancing in levels of knowledge from amateur to specialist, expanding their vocabulary and learning stories and legends surrounding specific poems or poets. Such fans may become critics, patrons, or researchers.

80. For words considered distinct to the *malhūn* register, there are lexicons by Abbès Jirari, Mohamed El-Fasi, and Abdessamad Belkabir. Belkabir mentioned to me that there is a man in Rabat working on an updated, more comprehensive dictionary of *malhūn* terms, but I do not yet have further details.

through with dialogized overtones; he creates artistically calculated nuances on all the fundamental voices and tones of this heteroglossia."⁸¹ Part of a poet's craft is attunement to social heteroglossia. Word choice is one aspect of the poet's larger craft of selecting language to give voice to certain parts of society. The language of *malhūn* reflects this process of selection and signification, as poets reach particular audiences through specific linguistic choices and audiences for their part interpret these texts, claiming the aspects that appeal to them socially and individually. Bakhtin writes about language as occupying a border space between self and other; it "represents the intersections of society at every level--from large-scale regions to the recesses of individual consciousness."⁸² So the language of *malhūn* represents a meeting place for the social multiplicity of Morocco, a place for sameness and difference to shine forth in the constantly shifting dialogic of unity and diversity in art and in society.

Salsouli offers an example of a poet who is conscious of this aspect of his poetry and his ability to innovate for specific purposes. I asked him about his poem *Tūnis al-khaḍrā'* / Tunisia the Green, having already heard from the singer Abdelali Briki in eastern Morocco about a Tunisian company calling and requesting that he and his musicians perform a song in Tunisia. The singer called up Salsouli, whose poetry he often sings, informing him of the request. Salsouli soon sent the singer a poem composed especially for this event, and the singer traveled with his musicians to Tunis where they performed Salsouli's poem in song. The performance was televised and well received. The poem is filled with praise for Tunisia, especially for its natural beauty. As for the

81. Bakhtin (1981): 278-279.

82. Bakhtin (1981): 293.

language, it uses a few words that seem specific to Morocco, but most of the words are shared, facilitating easy comprehension. The content also refers to a shared history and shared culture between Moroccans and Tunisians. Most remarkably, however, are lines like the last line of the second verse: *l-hrīsa w-lḥm l-‘allūsh barsha mshwī fn-nār* / harisa and fresh lamb grilled over fire. Here Salsouli names *harīsa*, a spicy sauce used in Tunisian cooking, and he uses the Tunisian word for a ram, ‘*allūsh*. The singer and his musicians were eager to point this out to me when they gave me a copy of the poem and told me about how well it was received. This recognition of words and concepts that many Tunisians value and celebrate facilitated the success of the performance. When I asked Salsouli how he knew these words (Had he spent time in Tunisia? Did he have Tunisian friends?), he just spread his hands and said "*Anā shā‘ir*," 'I'm a poet.' He said that poets needed to know *thaqāfa*, 'culture,' and seemed to think that this was common knowledge. This broad knowledge of language varieties, that poets take for granted as their natural skill, contrasts with scholarly discussions that try to place *malḥūn* into a single social or linguistic category instead of taking into account its diversity.

Malḥūn poems achieve meaning in part by drawing on a constellation of socially significant metaphors. A metaphor is an allegory-in-miniature, working through the appeal of instability. It provides audiences with a broader perspective by playing with the relations between objects. Innovation in metaphors appears less in the development of new metaphors than in the development of new meanings and interpretations of old metaphors. In Lamrini's *malḥūn* class at the Rabat conservatory, we discussed *tajrīd* / abstraction. We recalled how some poems imitate descriptions of the beloved, only to praise the *ka‘ba* or another sacred site. This technique plays on audience expectations for erotic love poetry, and then calls upon the audience to think on a more abstract level.

Malḥūn abounds in very rich metaphors that recur in Moroccan culture, and that develop in tandem with social contexts. Among the most prominent and productive metaphors in the *malḥūn* poems of this study are the following:

- Love as war⁸³
- Happiness as a garden⁸⁴
- Lovers / successful / happy people as eternal bride and groom⁸⁵
- Spring as wedding, and vice versa, and a garden as romantic love
- The beloved as master or mistress⁸⁶

83. See for example the fourth stanza of *Mā zīn wṣūlk* / How Delightful Your Arrival Would Be in Appendix IV.

84. See for example *Faṣl Al-Rabī‘* / The Season of Spring in Appendix IV. Whether erotic, communal, or intellectual, these poems depict the intimacy that exists between men. It draws on the ancient metaphor of paradise as a garden.

85. This metaphor informs the analysis of *Ḥan w-shfaq* / Have Mercy in Chapter Four. It runs throughout contemporary Moroccan culture, from the tiara that girls may wear when they first fast for Ramadan and when they get married, to the ‘*āmariyya* tradition of carrying a new spouse (especially the bride) above the heads of the crowd, to the connection of happy music and wedding music. Marriage and happiness are equated constantly throughout Moroccan society (similar to many other societies).

86. See for example *Irfaq a-mālki* / Be Kind, My Lady and *Jūdī bi-riḍāk* / Be Generous with Your Regard in Appendix IV. This image emphasizes the beloved's worth and agency, and the lover's admiration and respect for the beloved. The beloved may appear in poetry as a raincloud, symbolizing generous action that allows the earth (the lover) to

- The lover as sick or enslaved⁸⁷
- Disguise as revelation of inner character (capability or capacity)⁸⁸
- Poetry and love as a sea⁸⁹

Lakoff and Johnson propose that "The most fundamental values in a culture will be coherent with the metaphorical structure of the most fundamental concepts in the culture."⁹⁰ In the case of Morocco, there are multiple cultural sources (Arab, European,

flourish. For the latter, see *Ghīta* in Appendix IV.

87. See for example *Al-kāwī* / The Burned One in Appendix IV. This image expresses how desire makes people feel weak and helpless, and it invites the beloved to act and to express love. It also appears in *Al-Ḥarrāz* / The Guardian, which I analyze in Chapter Five.

88. Texts that include this image are *Al-Ḥarrāz* / The Guardian, *Al-Gnāwī* / The Gnaoui, and *Al-Ḍīf* / The Guest. See Chapter Five. It also appears in the film *Kīd al-nisā'* / *La Ruse des Femmes* / Women's Wiles (1997).

89. See for example the fourth stanza of *Mā zīn wṣūlk* / How Delightful Your Arrival Would Be in Appendix IV. Aslo Errachek (2008): 68. Wild Arzin composed poetry on entering the sea of love, and the image continues in *rai* music of North Africa. For more on *rai*, Schade-Poulsen (1999).

90. Linguist George Lakoff and philosopher Mark Johnson inspire my thinking on metaphor theory. Lakoff and Johnson (2003): 22. This collaborative project takes an experientialist approach, reworking key assumptions in Western philosophy by rejecting the possibility of any objective or absolute truth. It argues that our conceptual system is largely metaphorical.

African). *Malḥūn* presents gestalts of experience that dominate mass media in Morocco, alongside cultural voices of Arabs, Europeans, and Africans, all of which have some Moroccan listeners.

The final characteristic in our discussion that marks the formal discourse of *malḥūn* is the overall cultural register of *malḥūn* in as much as it provides tools for minority groups to relate to the mainstream culture. The aesthetics of *malḥūn* style and form appear in Hebrew as easily as in Arabic. Although the genre reflects the Muslim majority in Moroccan society, it also provides a kind of cultural discourse for Jews and other minorities in Morocco. This feature demonstrates how art constantly balances normative structures with innovation. Although *malḥūn* is embedded in an Arabic context, poets continually innovate in dialogue with the cultural form to which they relate. For every normative structure in *malḥūn*, fans collect and discuss divergent examples and innovations. The social boundaries of *malḥūn* correspond to the limits of dominant notions of contemporary Moroccan identity. Just as a limited amount of diversity counts as *malḥūn*, so a limited variety of characteristics count for what ‘Moroccan’ means to most people. It is the nature of such identity boundaries to endlessly shift, corresponding to the dialogic nature of public discourse.

For example, *Malḥūn* is so clearly associated with (Arabophone) cities that any link between the genre and Amazighi culture seems unlikely and/or unknown, and yet there are some signs of such a relationship. For example, a woman in the Salé conservatory mentioned to me that she enjoyed learning *malḥūn* songs partially because it seemed to reflect her mixed Arab-Amazighi heritage. She mentioned examples of Amazighi words in specific *malḥūn* poems, but unfortunately I was not able to record her

information. Mohammed El-Medlaoui has written a theory of syllables, claiming that the syllable structure of *malḥūn* derives directly from Amazighi pronunciation and performance of poetry.⁹¹ What is at stake here is the intersubjective national and cultural identity of Moroccans.

Gender provides a further example of how normative and marked social groups maintain dialogue through the discourse of *malḥūn*. There are many women singers (a great increase in the past decade, in fact), and there are also women musicians. However, women poets of *malḥūn* are almost invisible. Jirari names two women poets from nineteenth century Chefchaouen.⁹² El-Fasi names another, Lāla Ḥbībtī.⁹³ These few exceptions are perceived as proving the rule that *malḥūn* is a men's genre. While some people will allow that there were likely women poets that history failed to record (Fouad Guessous was most enthusiastic about this position), others will dismiss the idea that women ever composed *malḥūn* poems. Again, what is at stake here is the right to voice and artistically construct the nation. This tension plays out in girls' lives, as most girls who grow up singing *malḥūn* as a hobby are expected to cease performing in public when they marry. The girls I spoke with hope that they will not have to put aside their *malḥūn* activities when they grow up, but most recognize and accept that they have limited control over the decision because they all want to have domestic lives of marriage and parenting. For more on the social spaces and identities that Moroccan women performers

91. Dell and El-Medlaoui (2002): 250-257, including analysis of the poem *Fāṭima* by Muḥammad al-Ḥmar al-Maryāq (d. 1938 in Marrakesh).

92. Jirari (1970): 654-655. Their names are Al-Tūrdāniyya and al-Wardīghiyya.

93. El-Fasi (1992): 157.

navigate, see Rachel Newcomb's *Women of Fes: Ambiguities of Urban Life in Morocco* (2008).

Similarly, I suspect that while Moroccans will admit a Jewish *malhūn* composer or the existence of Moroccan Jews, the majority do not consider religious diversity as part of Moroccan culture.⁹⁴ Fortunately, unlike the dearth of explicitly Berber / Amazighi performances of *malhūn*, I have found examples of virtually every sub-genre written in Hebrew script, although I do not know of any current Jewish Moroccan *malhūn* poets.⁹⁵ The Moroccan Judeo-Arabic *katsidah* (ode) corresponds to Moroccan Arabic *qṣīda*, and

94. Most Moroccan Jews emigrated to Israel in the mid-twentieth century. The remainder is concentrated in Casablanca, with families and smaller communities in other areas. The Jewish minority left a great trove of literature, both oral and written, in Moroccan culture. Most of this material remains unstudied, due largely to the geographical separation and political sensitivities surrounding the emigration of Moroccan Jews to Israel in the mid-twentieth century. Hebrew still appears in Morocco in places such as the word *kasher* in select butcher shops in Rabat and Casablanca or over a megaphone for an Israeli tour group in Essaouira. When Hebrew appears in Moroccan texts, they are usually classified as Judeo-Arabic.

95. However, in some cases Moroccan emigrants to Israel continued poetic traditions such as *malhūn*. For example, Rabbi David Bouzaglo (emigrated to Israel 1965, d. 1975) continued to compose poetry in Hebrew and Judeo-Arabic in Israel. His friends and colleagues published his biography with eleven of his poems. His longest poem celebrates the festival of Mimouna. Another is a lament on the occasion of the disastrous earthquake of 1960 in Agadir, Morocco. See Chetrit (1997): 352-355.

refers to a relatively long text, usually with mixed rhyme (end rhyme, and often internal rhyme as well).⁹⁶ Those poems most easily identifiable as *malḥūn* consist of stanzas interspersed with a repeating refrain.

The common artistic language of *malḥūn* enables two sets of Moroccans to narrate the story of Joseph in different but complementary versions.⁹⁷ The Arabic *Yūsufiyya* tells another story of Joseph (in contrast to the Hebrew narrative just discussed):⁹⁸

96. Other Moroccan Judeo-Arabic poetry categories are as follows: *piyyut* (religious poem), *baqashah* (invocation, hymn), *kinah* (elegy, lament), and *shirah* (song, poem).

97. The Hebrew poem comes from the collection *Shir Yedidot*, and the complementary Arabic poem circulates in contemporary *malḥūn* performances.

98. See Appendix IV for full text and translation. This poem circulates in oral and written forms to this day. I acquired the hand-written text from Abdelali Briki in Erfoud at the request of a fan of *malḥūn* who wanted to have a copy of the poem for his personal collection. The poet Shaykh al-Makkī bi-l-Qurshī (d. 1933) grew up in Azemmour, and worked as a tailor until he lost his sight, allowing him to dedicate himself to his poetry exclusively. He spent time in Meknes, and died in al-‘Arā’ish in 1933. He composed a variety of poems, especially love stories, as well as biographical, political, invective, and religious praise poetry. Some of his stories explore sexual scandal (incest and adultery). At least one of his stories tells of a conflict between daily objects such as a teapot, tea glasses, and a tray. He also composed at least one *Ḥarrāz* / Guardian poem, including several new guises for the lover who tries to win access to his beloved, including the spy and the French soldier or gendarme. However, *Al-Burāqiyya* remains his most performed

Refrain: Hear the story of Joseph whose tale is true
 You'll wonder at the day his brothers disappeared him--
 His father went blind from his crying

First Verse:

In the name of the Generous, Here's the key to success--It comes from His Book

 The best thing I can say in my composition is this: In the name of God
I give thanks for Ta-Ha, as much as the light and its darkness,
 As many [creatures] as the Lord created on his Earth and as populate his heaven,
And for his descendents and spouses, his supporters, and all their friends and followers
 May the Lord keep us in his protection and grace,
And following this prayer, we look to a tale whose teller is sincere:
 The story of Joseph and his brothers, and the story of his father.

A Hebrew poem tells another story of Joseph:⁹⁹

poem. El-Fasi (1992): 73-77. Other poets who are said to have composed poems in the same sub-genre include Abd al-Rahman bin al-Tahir al-Dabbagh and al-Maghrawi.

99. For complete text and translation, see Appendix IV. The poem corresponds to the weekly scriptural reading of Genesis 41, and the last letter of each line forms an acrostic spelling: *Ani David Kayyam* / I am David Kayyam. David Kayyam (d. 1941) was one of the contributors to *Shir Yedidot*. Living in Essaouira, his compositions show his knowledge of multiple language varieties: Jewish Arabic of Essaouira, Moroccan Arabic, classical Arabic, Hebrew, Spanish, and English. He published in Hebrew and English periodicals, focusing on community life and concepts of Enlightenment. He was an intellectual with a vision for strengthening and inspiring his community. El Kayam,

Refrain:

To Him you called / O my son, my chosen one / the one who my soul desires
Save me, O rock of my redemption / master of the universe / creator of all souls

First Verse:

There is no limit to his happiness and the rejoicing of his heart,
for suddenly his stature rose.

For salvation his soul yearned--for thirteen years he remained a prisoner

When he longed, and his light was faltering, he did not doubt.

Upon his standing close before Pharoah to hear the dreams,

'to him it was revealed.'

The toil of Egypt, how great it was. As a physician and a prophet

He predicted the famine--He uncovered the mysteries...

Yiflah, Afriyat, and Alfasi (n.d.): 9. For another Hebrew version (more impersonal and formulaic), see Ben-Ami (1975): 112. For the tale of Job, Zafrani (1980):128-163. For *piyyutim* that narrate Moses' last moments, Zafrani 2005. For Muslim complement, *Wafāt sīdnā Mūsā* / The Death of Moses: Maghrāwī (2008): 227.

This poem looks to the past for affirmation and inspiration for the Jewish community.¹⁰⁰ The refrain depicts a poet talking to Joseph, his spiritual ancestor. It employs an end rhyme of *-ot*, creating coherence. Every verse is carefully crafted to form a pattern. It uses allusions and quotations regularly (in the penultimate line of each verse), referring to the rich history of the community. It also masters various forms of imagery, later including imagery of abundance, imagery of formidability, and imagery of the woman of valor. The Hebrew poem relies on intertextuality, situating its art within the Jewish community while in dialogue with the mainstream, predominantly Muslim, larger society, as demonstrated by its setting to the tune of a *malḥūn* poem:

100. This poem was sung in one or more synagogues in Morocco, starting as late as the 18th century. The poets, music leaders and probably most of the community, were familiar with mainstream Moroccan Arabic *malḥūn* poetry. Poets and scholars sang these poems for generations, known for their 'pure' Hebrew language and their training in Arab melodies. El Kayam, Yiflah, Afriyat, and Alfasi (n.d.): 13. Singers in synagogues, or at least the leaders, sang from handwritten manuscripts. The music leaders were often trained in *andalusi āla* music. This poem, like all those collected in *Shir Yedidot*, were sung in the winter months. The congregation sang these songs to 'wake the dawn' between Sukkot and Purim, totaling 19 shabbats. El Kayam, Yiflah, Afriyat, and Alfasi (n.d.): 5.

בשקל עשקי פכנאתא / יאטרא פלעאהד תבקאלי תאבתא / מן צאלת פג'מאלהא חיאתי /
ראחת רוحي לפאיקא מולאתי יאקות¹⁰¹

To the tune of: "My love for her lies in her mystery"¹⁰² / I wonder does she remain true in
commitment / The one who overwhelmed my life with her beauty / My sleepless soul has
left me, My Lady Yaqut."¹⁰³

The poem ends with the aspiration of *bayt ha-mikdash*, a utopian temple.¹⁰⁴ It is
telling that the celebration of old literature and community history occurs together with
aspirations for the future and hopes for a flourishing community. Discussion of the past
(the 'medieval,' for example) tend to carry with them implications for the present and
visions for the future. Much of the appeal of Judeo-Arabic *malhūn* poetry derives from

101. / بشكل : عشقي فكناتها / يا ترى فلعهد تبقى لي تابتة

من صالت فجمالها حياتي / راحت روحي لفايقة مولاتي ياقوت

Arabic translation. Many thanks to Kristen Brustad for helping me puzzle it out.

102. My English translation. A more literal translation would be "My love is in her
veil," but I want to indicate a broader meaning than merely a tangible veil. I understand it
to mean that as the lover watches his beloved fondly, she is cloaked in secrecy because he
wonders about her faithfulness to him and whether or not she returns his love.

103. I did not find a full text for the song indicated here, though the name "Yaqut" and
the words included are common. For example, *Al-Yāqūt* in El-Fasi (1990): 97-99.

104. The third temple is a powerful image of redemption. The introduction to the
collection ends with the same image as this poem, hoping for renewed unity of the Jewish
community. El Kayam, Yiflah, Afriyat, and Alfasi (n.d.): 17.

the use of mainstream (Arab Muslim) melodies. The hybridity of the genre testifies to the hybridity of the community.

In addition to original works such as this narrative poem of Joseph, there are also Judeo-Arabic copies of all-time favorites (by mainstream, Muslim poets). These draw both on Hebrew culture (for example, liturgical poems such as *Mi Kamokha* / Who Is Like You by Yehudah / Judah Halevi¹⁰⁵) and on mainstream Moroccan culture. Examples of the latter include *Al-Kāwī* / The Burned One,¹⁰⁶ as well as the famous poem *Al-Maḥbūb* / The Beloved by ‘Abd al-Qādir al-‘Alamī (1742-1850),¹⁰⁷ which has since been incorporated into one of the greatest hits of the contemporary band Nass El Ghiwane that I discuss in Chapter Four. These copies testify to the historical presence of patronage, reading, performing, and composing *malḥūn* within Moroccan Jewish communities.

The Hebrew and Arabic Joseph poems give vastly differing accounts of Joseph. They share only two main elements: a common religious discourse, featuring Joseph and his associated characters, and a common poetic discourse of *malḥūn*. They attest to processes of re-interpretation, as Moroccans produce innovative interpretations of normative forms. Mohammed El-Fasi's definitive *Ma‘lamat al-malḥūn* / Encyclopedia of *Malḥūn* lists four poets who composed poems in the *Yūsufiyya* style, narrative poetry that recounts tales of Joseph: Al-Makkī bi-l-Qurshī,¹⁰⁸ ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Al-Ṭāhir al-

105. Zafrani (1980): 101-127.

106. Ben-Ami (1975): 107.

107. For text and further information, Zafrani (1980): 222-238.

108. Poet of Arabic *Yūsufiyya*, d. 1933.

Dabbāgh, Al-Maghrāwī,¹⁰⁹ and an anonymous poet of Tafilalt.¹¹⁰ Any signs of Judaism or of the Hebrew language are invisible in this part of the official historical record. In my map of Moroccan Music (Appendix I), Jewish traditions are shown separately in the map, and they are perceived this way, but in fact they overlap with non-Jewish traditions.¹¹¹

109. Originally from Tafilalt, Abd al-Aziz al-Maghrāwī (d. 1603) was a *qāḍī* / judge in Fes.

110. El-Fasi (1986): 63.

111. Most Moroccans today do not know of any Jewish poets of *malḥūn*, though if they have heard of one, then it is probably Raphael Moussa El Baz. He lived in Sefrou (near Fes) in the nineteenth century, where he was well known as a rabbi who composed poetry in Hebrew and Arabic. (Judeo-Arabic poets tend to be from the following locations in Morocco: Sefrou, Safi, Essaouira (or Mogador), Tafilalt, and the Dra'a Valley.) He has also become legendary for his respectable reputation among both Jews and Muslims, and sung poetry became a vehicle for shared communion:

[During times of famine] the great one of the Muslims used to ask him to pray much...for they regarded him as an angel. And sometimes, when the Imam used to ascend the tower of their house of prayer at dawn to welcome the day with songs of prayer, the rabbi also used to respond to him (*oneh liqrato*) from the window of his home with hymns (*baqashot*) in Arabic. The Imam [then] used to be silent to hear him.

Source: Deshen (1989): 25. As Deshen says, "the authenticity of the incident is not certain. The significant point is the fact of the account." For El Baz's poem that opens *Subḥān man fraq jins l-nās* / "Glory to the One who differentiated human beings,"

Malḥūn texts attest to the ongoing tensions and interactions between religious communities, and to their negotiations of Moroccan national identity.

In this chapter, I have discussed a set of tools wielded by *malḥūn* poets: meter, rhyme, intertextuality, verse form, heteroglossic lexicon, figurative language, and the use of Hebrew in Judeo-Arabic texts. Each feature illustrates how the balance of normativity and innovation produces heteroglossia. The next chapter analyzes how heteroglossia affects the lived experience of *malḥūn* performances.

Guessous (2008): 480-487. His poem, *Ma rīt menhuwa hānī* / "I have never seen anything more sublime," was displayed in the Jewish Museum in Casablanca in 2011. He also has poetry in El Kayyam, Yiflah, Afriyat, and Alfasi (n.d.): 356. For other Jewish poets, see El-Fāsī (1992): 272.

CHAPTER II. THE SOCIAL LIFE OF MALHUN

الملحون ذاكرة حية للمغاربة في اللغة وفي الطقوس .

Malhūn is a living memory for Moroccans, both in language and in customs.

- Professor of English at Moulay Ismail University in Meknes¹¹²

What happens when the texts and tools of *malhūn*, that I discussed in Chapter One, move into performances embedded in social contexts? Whereas the first chapter approached *malhūn* from the perspective of poets who craft the wording of poetry, this chapter approaches *malhūn* from the perspective of lived experience of *malhūn* performance.¹¹³ The following anecdote illustrates this process of interpretation.

A woman in Rabat told me that *malhūn* reminds her of her grandmother from Fes.¹¹⁴ She remembers walking into the sitting room as a child, and frequently seeing her grandmother tucked into cushions on the wraparound sofas of a typical Moroccan *ṣālon*, her hands busy in needlework, although her eyesight was poor. Her attention was glued to the radio on a shelf by her shoulder, and she sat listening to *malhūn* for hours at a time. She was illiterate, but she picked up countless expressions from *malhūn* poems, and she

112. 7 May 2011.

113. For performance, I am relying on the following definition: "Performances are aesthetic practices--patterns of behavior, ways of speaking, manners of bodily comportment--whose repetitions situate actors in time and space, structuring individual and group identities." Deborah Kapchan (1995): 479.

114. 30 July 2008.

would repeat them from time to time. For her granddaughter, to this day, *malhūn* is her grandmother and the source of her grandmother's wisdom. In this example, there are no specific artists present, and yet the genre clearly functions because this is how my consultant thinks of the genre and how it *means* to her, or how it holds meaning for her. Thus *malhūn* functions as a complex symbol.¹¹⁵ In this anecdote, *malhūn* is an artistic register that appeals to a Moroccan woman who lived through the French Protectorate and national independence. This genre probably appeals to her through processes of memory and subjectivity or identity formation. She repeats certain phrases, and so performs *malhūn* in meaning-laden fragments that come to represent something of herself and something of her culture for those around her. Bakhtin notes that every word is "half someone else's. It becomes 'one's own' only when the speaker populates it with his own intention[s], his own accent, when he appropriates the word, adapting it to his own semantic and expressive intention."¹¹⁶ This grandmother uses the language of *malhūn* to make sense of her world and to relate socially. She embodies *malhūn*, creating a *malhūn*-

115. C.S. Peirce defines 'sign' as "something which stands to somebody for something in some respect or capacity," and he defines several kinds of signs. Peirce (1931): 228. I draw on three of his kinds of signs: icon, index, and symbol. An icon resembles or imitates an object (for example, a portrait or diagram, see Peirce 247). An index is connected to, and affected by, its object (for example, a disease symptom or smoke indicating fire, see Peirce 248). A symbol denotes by virtue of its interpretant (for example, the words "horse" and "caballo" both symbolize a horse because they are interpreted as such, see Peirce 249).

116. Bakhtin (1981): 293.

esque social space for all those around her. For the granddaughter, *malhūn* comes to represent one lifestyle or way of being in Moroccan society.

This chapter aims to show *malhūn*'s "socially charged life" through its performance and interpretation in order to demonstrate its high level of markedness and its effectiveness for voicing in public discourses. I demonstrate how Moroccans enable the interpretive process that makes *malhūn* meaningful. Bakhtin reminds us that there are no neutral words, only less marked words: "Each word tastes of the context and contexts in which it has lived its socially charged life..."¹¹⁷ First, I introduce the texts that circulate most broadly in contemporary Moroccan society. This limited, familiar repertoire is essential to this chapter's analysis of *malhūn* as lived performance since, in Ingarden's parlance, "the literary work of art constitutes an aesthetic object only when it is expressed in a concretization."¹¹⁸ The texts in concretizations, those aesthetic encounters that make meaning, are generally not entire poems. Instead, this repertoire consists of refrains and first stanzas. This becomes evident in the following analysis.

Then I identify several stylistic devices that activate audiences' reception. Of course performance is more than the sum of its features; it is under-determined. Identifying devices helps to explain performance, but it does not tell the whole story. Finally, I analyze instances of *malhūn* reception in order to capture snapshots of what is happening in performance. Audiences react to elements that seem old and to those that

117. Bakhtin (1981): 293. In *malhūn*, texts operate not only as words, but also as refrains or parts of texts that are meaningful to audiences.

118. Ingarden (1973): 372. I explain the concept of concretization later in this chapter.

seem new. They use the familiar to face change. The normative and the innovative work together to reflect the fabric and the textures of social life in Morocco.

People from diverse backgrounds think of *malḥūn* as songs they heard sung by Houcine Toulali, with lyrics for the most part by Al-‘Alamī.¹¹⁹ As for the recognizable *malḥūn* poems that circulate in contemporary Moroccan popular culture, they are limited to four types. The first type is spiritual songs, especially the refrains. These are most comparable with songs like “Amazing Grace” in contemporary popular culture in the United States. The most popular refrain at the time of my research was as follows:

119. A Moroccan-American businessman in his thirties told me that his favorite *malḥūn* poem is *Ghīta* as sung by Toulali. A Moroccan-American Arabic teacher in his thirties told me that his favorite *malḥūn* poem is *Al-Qalb* / The Heart as sung by Toulali. A maid in eastern Morocco, in her forties, told me that her favorite *malḥūn* poem is *Ghazāl Fāṭima* as sung by Toulali. They and many others think of Toulali's renditions of *malḥūn* poems as most inspiring. For a repertoire of Toulali, see Bannūr (2003): 84-85.

Translation:	Transliteration:	Arabic Text: ¹²⁰
May God send blessings on the Prophet, the rider of the Burāq	<i>allāhuma ṣallī ‘la l-nbbī rākib l-burāqī</i>	اللهم صلي على النبي راكب البراق
Muḥammad, the essence of being, the Ṭa-ha	<i>Muḥammad ‘ayn l-wjūd al-ṭāhā</i>	محمد عين الوجود الطه

The second type is love longs, also for the refrains. The best known song is *Fāṭima*, closely followed by *Ghīta*, and then a host of other songs also named for the women addressed by the songs.¹²¹ Here is the refrain that Moroccans are most likely to recall when asked about *malḥūn*:

120. Poet Shaykh Al-Makkī bi-l-Qurshī (d. 1933) of Azemmour. My source is the hand-written text provided by Laila Lamrini. At the time of writing, there is a video online of Asmae Lazrak singing *Al-Burāqiyya*:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5SHEo4YDRzU>

121. Both refrains are recorded and translated in Appendix IV. At the time of writing, there is a video available online of Laila Lamrini performing at University of Washington in Seattle (with me as translator). She opens with a sung greeting, and then sings the refrain of *Fāṭima*. The video includes part of her lecture in Arabic and scenes from her songs: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Br4O8kb-oas>

ارحمي يا راحت العقل ترحامي من جفاك طال سقامي

كيف نبقي حايروانت مسدليا روفي يا لغزال فاطمة

Have mercy, O peace of mind, have mercy

My illness lengthens in your absence

How is it that I remain in anguish, while you are oblivious, closed to me

Be generous O gazelle Fatma

The third type comprises lyrical songs with political messages made famous by the Nass El Ghiwane movement, most notably *Sham'a* / Candle and *Al-Nahla* / The Bee.¹²² See Appendix III for details of the movement and its texts. The fourth type, narrative poems, contains only a single example that circulates widely: *Al-Harrāz* / The Guardian by 'Alī al-Baghdādī.¹²³

These are songs that people might hear in a public performance, and go home with the tune in their heads. Back in the house, they recount who sang which songs and

122. At the time of writing there are videos available online for both songs. Jil Jilala singing their rendition of *Al-sham'a* / The Candle:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tvgpAaiTyqI>

Nass El Ghiwane singing their recent hit, *Nahla Chama* / Shama the Bee:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Po6GG20019s>

123. Al-Baghdādī lived during the turn of the twentieth century. Hailing from the region of Elhoucima-Taounat, northeast of Fes, he traveled to Fes and knew poets of Fes. See El-Fasi (1992): 130-132 for biography. See El-Fasi (1990): 83-90 for text of poem.

whatever they found remarkable. Some performances linger in memory, especially when the audience receives them dynamically (singing along, clapping, swaying, nodding a head, rising, dancing, singing *Ṣlā w-slām* / Peace and Prayers and trilling *zaghārīd* to the entire gathering). These texts recur through most Moroccans' lives, creating a laminated, shared social and artistic experience.¹²⁴

Most Moroccans' familiarity with a mere handful of the vast collection of *malḥūn* poems increases the genre's mystique and various associations including: 1) historical figures and the past, mystics and miracles or spiritual knowledge and ethics such as patience, brotherly love, etc. and 2) ideals and concepts of romantic and erotic love, fidelity, chivalry, etc. Contemporary Moroccans tend to associate *malḥūn* poetry with mystics such as Majdūb (d. circa 1565), famous for his quatrains that sparkle with wit and wisdom, but are not considered *malḥūn* poems by experts.¹²⁵ *Malḥūn* lends itself to sing-along events, and serves as both a product and catalyst of developing mystical

124. The term 'laminated' comes from Goffman (1974): 82.

125. Majdūb (Fr. Majdoub) was a wandering mystic and poet of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries during the Sa'adi era. Focused on God and mysticism, Majdūb could have been merely a marginal figure. However, as Skali observes, Majdūb became instead a symbol of selflessness and immunity to earthly concerns. Faouzi Skali (2007): 127. His quatrains, some of which could be sung, are published, read, and memorized by Moroccans. For example: *La tkhammam fī diyq l-ḥāl / Shūf 'ind Allāh mā wsa' hā* (Worry not in times of tightness / See how God loosens them). Al-Majdūb (n.d.): 8. One of Stefania Pandolfo's key informants studied the mystic quatrains of Majdūb with his learned father, alongside the *malḥūn* poetry of Al-Maghrāwī. Pandolfo (1997): 143.

communities. Refrains allow diverse audiences to come together for brief periods of collective singing, repeatedly collecting and directing the attention of individuals to the ever-new (even if familiar) performance of a particularly catchy line.

Now I turn from the most circulating texts to stylistic features. Like the textual features in the first chapter, *malḥūn* performances also employ stylistic features that key performances. Bauman and Briggs observe that "poetic patterning, frames, genres, participatory structures, and other dimensions of performance draw attention to the status of speech as social action."¹²⁶ I will introduce three features here: rhythm, melody, and rhetorical strategies.

Rhythmic elements in *malḥūn* consist of stressed and unstressed syllables, generally created by a drum. There are three foundational rhythms (Ar. *mīzān*, pl. *mawāzīn* or *miyāzīn*) in *malḥūn*. Lamrini explains that each can be played in its original version (*l-aṣl*) or in at least one variation (*l-zawāq*).¹²⁷ *Al-ḥiḍārī* (known for its origin in Sufi meetings or *al-ḥaḍra*) is characterized in its most basic form by three even beats in every measure: x x x. *Al-drīdka* is distinguished in its most basic form by measures of two heavy beats followed by a pause: xx - xx -. This accelerated rhythm / tempo often indicates the end of the poem. *Al-qubbāḥī* is distinguished in its most basic form by measures of three heavy beats, with a pause following the first beat: x - xx. This rhythm

126. Bauman and Briggs (1990): 65. This source also includes an excellent summary of the origins and purposes of performance approaches on page 79.

127. Lamrini's teaching in her course at the musical conservatory is my main source for this information on rhythms.

is reserved for the final section, known as 'the departure' or 'the leaving'. Arabic terms for the ending include *sāriḥa*, *inṣirāf*, *ṣrūf* or *ikhtitām*. Sometimes the *sāriḥa* is described as *ḥurr* / free, meaning that it need not follow the constraints of the usual hemistich structure. The final stanza is the most free and unrestrained juncture of *malḥūn* performances.

Bakhtin notes that rhythm and meter iron out social tensions: “*Rhythm, by creating an unmediated involvement between every aspect of the accentual system of the whole...destroys in embryo those social worlds of speech and of persons that are potentially embedded in the word: in any case, rhythm puts definite limits on them, does not let them unfold or materialize.*”¹²⁸ They produce a flattening effect that makes words fall into place despite their associations with disparate contexts. In a spring concert, I was standing in the audience clapping next to Fouad Guessous. Before the volume and tempo increased, we had been discussing Larbi Aichane, a *malḥūn* poet who composes while living and working in Germany. Suddenly Guessous grinned at me, holding his mobile phone and explaining that he had dialed the number of his friend so that Aichane could hear the *qubbāḥī* even from far away in Germany. After a few moments, he gestured to me, and we moved away from the blaring speakers so that we could exchange greetings with Aichane. He was delighted to participate aurally in the *malḥūn* performance, hearing the musical climax and sharing in the socializing that occurs between fans and researchers such as Guessous and myself. Through his friend's telephone connection, Aichane joined in the aesthetic and social encounter occurring in Fes. Simply listening together to a particular rhythm put all of us in sync, joining us momentarily across differences of space, time, personality, and even nationality (in my own case).

128. Bakhtin (1981): 298. Italics in original.

Melody provides a limited aural repertoire for *malḥūn*. Theoretically, there are innumerable potential tunes in *malḥūn* because someone could compose a new tune, but that is not the current reality.¹²⁹ Poets return to the tried and true melodies that have become classics, making new poems fit into the existing genre with its established rhyme schemes. The most common tunes are as follows: *bayātī*, *sīka*, *istihlāl*, *ḥijāz*, and *raṣad* (or *sīka*). The majority of these tunes are shared with Andalusī *āla* music.¹³⁰ Specialists tend to classify their repertoires by the names of famous songs. One might say for example, ‘*ala qiyās Warda* / to the tune of Warda, or ‘*ala qiyās Rashīda* / to the tune of Rashida. That said, a single song frequently includes more than one melody. For example, *Sham‘a* / Candle may include: either *al-ḥiḍārī* or *al-istihlāl*, then *al-bayātī*, *al-ḥijāz*, and either *al-raṣad* or *al-sīka*. Modulations (Ar. *qelb*) from one melody to another are a sign of the singer's accomplishment. Songs move only from lower to higher modes or octaves (from *bayātī* to *ḥijāz* for example, but never the opposite way). This

129. Arabic terms for melody or tune are *naghma*, *maqām*, *laḥn*, or even *qiyās*, the last of which also refers to the meter. Schuyler translates *qiyās* as musical setting, literally measurement.

130. Andalusī *āla* music consists of eleven codified suites (Ar. *nūba*) of five melodies each. Al-Rāyis' authoritative manual of *āla* texts names the following basic tunes: *ramal al-māya*, *al-māya*, *rās*, *istihlāl*, *raṣad*, *gharīb l-ḥusayn*, *al-ḥijāz*, *al-ḥijāz al-kabīr*, *basīṭ*, *qā'im w-nisf*, *al-baṭṭḥī*, *al-durj*, *quddām*. *Āla* and *malḥūn* together form the *ṭarab* / art music branch of Moroccan music. For my map of Moroccan musical genres, see Appendix I.

unidirectional modulation serves to create a building effect. A good singer will master each of the common melodies until she is able to move between them at will, without need for a musician to guide her.

Rhetorical strategies include styles of oral delivery, uses of gesture, body motion, and other paralinguistic and nonverbal features, and framing devices such as opening and closing formulae, which may or may not appear in written texts.¹³¹ One of the oral delivery strategies of *malḥūn* is the use of a *sarrāba* / introduction. During live performances, musicians usually begin with an instrumental prelude. Then master poets sing a *sarrāba* before the *qṣīda*.¹³² The *sarrāba* (pl. *sarārīb*) is approximately the length of a stanza, and it has no refrain.¹³³ Like the *qṣīda*, the *sarrāba* also consists of several

131. This idea benefits from discussions of how such features are metacommunicative in nature from Briggs (1988): 9.

132. I often hear practitioners say *sarāba* (with no *shadda* or doubling of the "r"). However, it seems that the term is technically *sarrāba* derived from *sarraba*, to set out, especially at night, so I retain the *shadda*. In the opening of the annual Fes festival for *malḥūn*, this introductory poetry was defined thus by an announcer: *Al-sarrāba manẓūma wa-bidūn ḥarba wa-lā aqsām* / The introduction is in verse, without a refrain or stanzas. 28 April 2011.

133. For a musicological description of a performance, see the work of Philip Schuyler. He explains that the *sarrāba* is played in 5/8 time, the *qṣīda* in 2/4, and the last stanza modulates to 6/8 in the *qufla* / lock, closing, finale (CD jacket of "The Music of Islam and Sufism in Morocco" in the series "Anthology of World Music" International

lines united by an end rhyme. Unlike full poems, the *sarrāba* does not contain an explicit signature and so they are generally anonymous. While hundreds of poems (sg. *qṣīda*) have remained, the *sarrāba* was not typically written, and so only dozens remain. Much like full poems, and perhaps for a longer period, these introductions were extemporized. Today they are memorized, although current poets may still compose a *sarrāba* to accompany a particular poem.

Take for example the comic poem by Salsouli that compares and contrasts a portable phone with a stationery phone. I had heard this song as a recording and at a wedding, and I had a copy of the text written by Salsouli's own hand in 2002. So when I attended a public concert in Meknes, and Salsouli preceded his popular poem with a *sarrāba*, I concluded that he had composed an introduction for the occasion in order to offer a proper performance in front of his colleagues and many of Morocco's most dedicated fans of *malḥūn*.¹³⁴ It was a rare treat to hear original *malḥūn* poetry, and this served as an opportunity for Salsouli to lengthen his successful poem, adding some greetings and setting it up with the *sarrāba*.¹³⁵

Institute of Traditional Music, Rounder Records (1999): 10).

134. 10 June 2011, free public outdoor concert at *Sāḥat Hadīm* / Hadim Square, in front of *Bāb Maṣṣūr* / Mansour Gate in Meknes.

135. A *sarrāba* generally begins in the common meter *mbīt*, and ends in *radma*, which distinguishes it from full poems. The final line of the *sarrāba* is followed by a *qufla* / closing, a musical transition that indicates the movement from introduction to poem. A non-specialist hears a slowing of tempo, followed by one or two sets of two quick beats, before the singer begins the refrain of the main poem. The *sarrāba* might also contain

Singing this introduction accomplishes several objectives. First, it displays knowledge and accomplishment; the performer is able not only to memorize a poem, but to set it up as well. The *sarrāba* usually shares the same musical *maqām* / mode as the poem, and it is a mark of older performances. Students perform songs that they have learned, but they do not usually have a large enough repertoire to have an introduction that matches the poem in subject matter. Second, the *sarrāba* is thematically linked to the poem, and so sets the mood for the subject of the poem. It usually includes greetings: *a lālla* / Madam or *a sīdī* / Sir. The literary device of address serves to draw the audience's attention to the coming poem. It often includes nature imagery, evoking strong feelings of celebration, love or loss. In this sense, and in its placement at the beginning of the performance, it resembles the *nasīb* / introduction of classical Arabic poetry.¹³⁶ Third and most importantly for the performers, the *sarrāba* warms up singers' voices and establishes the performance relationship between the singers, musicians, and audience.

The *sarrāba* can frame a *malḥūn* performance, but it is a strategic choice because it keys a shift in footing.¹³⁷ CD recordings consist of songs without *sarrābas*. When the prince in the film *Kīd l-Nsā* / Women's Wiles requests *malḥūn* poetry from his court

sections, even incorporating multiple melodies, but not multiple rhythms (*mīzān*).

136. For detailed information regarding the *nasīb*, see chapters one and two of Jaroslav Stetkevych, *Zephyrs of Najd*.

137. Footing is Goffman's term for "the alignment a participant takes up in relation to his or her utterance." Goffman (1981): 128. Keys "index the shifts between different discourse modes, including for instance *direct discourse...mentioned discourse...and quoted discourse*." Hanks (2000): 76.

singer, the singer recites poetry without any *sarrāba*, due to limitations of time and perhaps interest. In practice sessions, a singer generally performs songs without *sarrābas*. Students in music conservatories may memorize one *sarrāba* and several poems in a given year in order to gradually acquire a performance repertoire. For example, in the Rabat-Salé curriculum, second-year students acquire the *sarrāba* called *faṣl al-rabīʿ*, and fourth-year students work on the *sarrāba* called *shāyn ktab l-ʿālim*.¹³⁸ One of the most famous introductions is *Faṣl al-rabīʿ* / The Season of Spring. It may precede a *qṣīda* such as *Mazīn waṣūlak* / How Delightful Your Arrival Would Be because they share the same melody. The introduction *Shāyn ktab l-ʿālim* / What Has God Planned could not precede that poem, but it could precede a poem such as *Ghīta*, because again, they share the same melody. Another reason to place *Faṣl al-rabīʿ* / The Season of Spring before *Mazīn waṣūlak* / How Delightful Your Arrival Would Be is the subject matter. I have included their full texts in Appendix IV. In this order of performance, the introduction describes the natural beauty of spring, drawing on metaphors of a garden as romantic love. If the performance takes place outdoors in the spring, so much the better for. In any case, the introduction prepares the audience for the lover's complaint that follows in the poem itself.

There is no closing formulae equivalent to the distinctive opening provided by a *sarrāba*. A *malḥūn* poem usually closes with multiple repetitions of the refrain, often with a choir joining the singer (and the audience possibly singing along). The refrain, whether commenting on love or loss, serves as a sort of mantra through this repetition, building energy and a sense of community through shared experience. The refrain and the

138. See Appendix II.

last verse are the only parts of the song considered remotely suitable for dancing, as indicated by the lively musical accompaniment.

In addition to use of a *sarrāba*, another rhetorical technique at work in *malḥūn* is forms of address and the rhetoric of questions. Rhetorical discourse, by definition, is oriented toward the listener.¹³⁹ In the following opening of *Sham‘a* / Candle, we can see that the poet creates a dialogue between himself and a candle. That dialogue opens a space for sharing emotions and personal narratives:

Translation:	Transliteration:	Arabic Text: ¹⁴⁰
Why, O candle, do you cry as long as the nights last?	<i>‘alāsh yā sham‘a</i> <i>tabkī mā ṭālat al-</i> <i>liyālī</i>	علاش يا شمعة تبكي ما طالت الليالي
What's with you, you who stand ready to cry every night?	<i>wāsh bik yā illī</i>	واش بك يا اللي تتهيا لبكاك كل ليلا
Why do you spend the length of the darkness giving light?	<i>tathaya' l-bukāk kull</i> <i>līlā</i>	علاش كتباتي طول الديجان كتلالي
What's with you, you who have become from this crying so weakened?	<i>‘alāsh katbātī ṭūl ad-</i> <i>dījān katlālī</i> <i>wāsh bik yā illā</i> <i>wllītī min dā l-bukā</i> <i>‘alīlā</i>	واش بك يا اللي ولّيتي من دا البكا عليلا

139. Bakhtin (1981): 280.

140. Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī, known as Wild Arzin (1742-1822), was a poet and musician of Fes.

This personal dialogue becomes most interesting in the context of a social performance. The original performance context of the eighteenth century is lost to us, but the song continues to be sung at occasions devoted to human rights and at the close of "commemorative occasions to memorialize the deaths of political prisoners."¹⁴¹ Most Moroccans would not even recognize the lyrics as originating in the eighteenth century. Instead, they associate them with the Nass El Ghiwane movement, and perhaps with Jil Jilala, the band that appropriated this earlier poetry in the interest of contemporary causes during the 'lead years'.¹⁴² In the 1970s, the musical group Jil Jilala recorded the song as part of a generation of young musicians, many growing up in poor Casablanca neighborhoods, who combined rock-and-roll protest music with traditional Moroccan music and motifs. Its poignant dialogue between the poet and a weeping candle captures the human need to mourn and to hope for a better world. *Al-Sham'a*, in its various renditions, provides one of the most stunning examples of *malhūn* at work in Moroccan society. There are other songs by the same name, but none achieved the popularity of this one. The dialogue and series of questions lead listeners to associate themselves with the audience and all those present in the performance situation. The performance binds together all the listeners, asking them to revisit their own pain for communal renewal.

141. Slyomovics (2005): 201. For more details on her study, see my review in "E3W Review of Books," University of Texas at Austin, Spring 2008. Available online: <http://www.cwrl.utexas.edu/orgs/e3w/Slyomovics>

142. The 'lead years' (*zaman al-raṣāṣ* / *années de plomb*) refer to Morocco's repressive post-independence years.

One effect of these questions and the engagement of audience members in a social dialogue is the creation of a new community, or at least a temporary sense of community. The constant present of lyric poetry, through devices such as deictics, shifters, and interlocutors, constructs a literary and cultural world. Susan Stewart observes: "Whenever we use the terms now or here or I or you, we find ourselves immersed in the 'now' of articulation, the 'here' of the space in which speech is spoken, the 'I' of the speaker, the 'you' of the listener. It is...not just that such terms are context-dependent: they themselves define and create the circumstances of specific contexts."¹⁴³ Every time performers address the candle in *Al-Sham'a*, those present revisit the contemplative context that first inspired the *malhūn* poem, which is implied and inferred as a mythical golden age of superior skills in emotional and artistic expression. Stewart points out that "Deictic terms always raise issues of intention and reception," and asks what are the consequences of lyric poetry extending from the present.¹⁴⁴

The repeated performance of *malhūn* through sets of practices (composing, presenting, competing, singing, etc.) create a field of habitus.¹⁴⁵ There is no relationship

143. Stewart (2002): 150. The rhetoric of questions occurs in other Moroccan performance genres. For example, the *rakba* poetry recorded by Stefania Pandolfo also relies on questions, addressing the remains. She discusses the poem "Tell Me Sunken Well, attributed to l-Hajj Hammu Kerruum. This trope is as old as extant Arabic poetry, recalling seventh century Arabian poetry of *al-aṭlāl* / the remains of a campsite. The rhetoric of questions is not unique to *malhūn*, and yet it adds to this genre's powerful social effects.

144. Stewart (2002): 154; 198.

without recognition of the Other. Just as the social world of *malḥūn* consists of relationships, so there is no "us" without a "you" and a "me."

The final stylistic feature in this discussion is references to daily life and communal rituals. For example, the most famous song by Nass El Ghiwane (and many a *malḥūn* poem) includes a tea tray. The poet observes its untouched tea glasses as a social commentary on how people went missing due to political imprisonment during the 'lead years,' or at least this is the way the song was widely interpreted.¹⁴⁶ The most obvious example in *malḥūn* is comic debate poetry, such as Salsouli's poetry discussed in the final chapter, that contrasts a modern convenience such as a mobile phone with an antique like a stationary phone. Other objects include candles, pots, bracelets, and a bank check.¹⁴⁷ Thus *malḥūn* taps into a matrix of cultural associations. Lived spaces and material culture provide resources for poets and language users, with meaning resonating in objects, even to the point of allegory. This feature especially is not only a structure upon which an interpretation is hung, but is also produced through the interpretive process.¹⁴⁸

145. *Habitus*, Bourdieu's term, denotes a social context created and sustained through practices: "the system of structured, structuring dispositions, the *habitus*, which is constituted in practice and is always oriented towards practical functions." Bourdieu (1990): 52.

146. See for example Muhanna (1993): 132.

147. At the time of writing, there is a video online of Abdelali Briki singing the comic debate between the tinder and the gas range:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hFg_XY9Px_I

Part of the appeal of *malhūn* lies in its frequent references to daily life: tea service and beverages, food and friends, arts and crafts. Descriptions of familiar objects produce feelings of pleasure, coziness, and admiration. This familiarity contrasts with its counterpoint of refinement and erudition. Scenes of luxury include gardens, palaces, and literary salons. The lexicon of *malhūn* also combines a variety of linguistic elements from book-learning with a variety of linguistic elements that are coded as familiar (Moroccan, *maghribī*, casual, domestic speech). In doing so, it combines sectors of Moroccan society ranging from the world of books to the world of home life. *Malhūn* is a complex register of experience that, like Bourdieu's concept of *habitus*, makes sense to audiences in various social locations according to habits of thought and ways of life that shape each individual's mental universe. Bakhtin observed that "every utterance is oriented toward [an] apperceptive background of understanding, which is not a linguistic background but rather one composed of specific objects and emotional expressions."¹⁴⁹ He was building on the idea that poetic language foregrounds linguistic features against the background of spoken language and canonical literary language. In the same way, every utterance gains meaning in relation to those objects and experiences that surround it in a given culture.

Now I focus the analysis on individual experiences and interpretations of *malhūn*.¹⁵⁰ Each time that *malhūn* is performed, it is a further instance of concretization of

148. Radway (1991): 8.

149. Bakhtin (1981): 281.

150. For this point, I am drawing on cultural studies theories by Stanley Fish and on reception theories by Janice Radway, Jane Tompkins, and others.

malhūn.¹⁵¹ As Hobson observes, "there can be as many interpretations of a programme [or text] as the individual viewers bring to it."¹⁵² And yet "whatever the theoretical possibility of an infinite number of readings, in fact, there are patterns or regularities to what viewers and readers bring to texts in large part because they acquire specific cultural competencies as a consequence of their particular social location."¹⁵³ I found this the case

151. Concretization is the aesthetic realization of a literary work. An individual's realization of art takes place somewhere between sensory experience and the work itself. Ingarden (1973): 336. For example, an audience member can see or hear the words "Who's there?" that open *Hamlet* by Shakespeare. The text in and of itself is separate from its interpretation, and this instance contains two possible interpretations. In another context, the listener will interpret this question directly, and probably respond with his or her name. In the context of the play, however, the audience accepts this fictional reality as real enough to cohere with the remainder of the text and as fictional enough to not be taken directly. This place of fictional reality in which an individual experiences art is the concretization of the text. Every text contains multiple possible concretizations. Ingarden sees each text, in and of itself, as comprising multiple strata of possibility: "phonetic formations, units of meaning, and aspects," each of which contains "spots of indeterminacy." Ingarden (1973): 341. Concretization takes place when an individual (reader or listener) fills in these spots of indeterminacy through inference, implicature, and other methods of comprehension and interpretation: "it is only in a concretization that those aesthetic values that are conditioned by the dynamics of the work or carried by them can be fully constituted." Ingarden (1973): 343.

152. Hobson (1982): 170.

in Morocco when I heard many responses to my questions about the meaning of *malḥūn*, and found that the various answers fit into several categories. Radway argues that similar readings are produced "because similarly located readers learn a similar set of reading strategies and interpretive codes that they bring to bear upon the texts they encounter."¹⁵⁴ Different audiences have varying literacies, depending upon the social locations of their members. I have seen the process of interpretation in a variety of contexts.

The most explicit instance of this process that I observed was also elementary and partial. It occurred in Laila Lamrini's *malḥūn* class that I attended in the music conservatory of Rabat. At an early stage in learning a new song, Lamrini requested students to paraphrase stanzas in their own words. The first student sang a stanza, her eyes moving between the text and the air in front of her face, trying to remember the lines that she was still memorizing. Then she rendered the same text in her own words, translating from the unusual language of *malḥūn* to her own ordinary and familiar speech. Of course, she paused at many unknown words, and Lamrini explained any difficult parts to the class. Sometimes Lamrini allowed for multiple interpretations, although the exercise was for the most part a way of teaching students unfamiliar language. Nevertheless, increasing students' knowledge of *malḥūn* enables them to make their own informed interpretations of poems in future if they so choose.

Similar to the thorny issue in religions of hermeneutics and private interpretations of scripture, individual Moroccans also make their own meanings of *malḥūn* (and so add to its social meaning, particularly since a private interpretation is almost never held by

153. Radway (1991): 8.

154. Radway (1991): 8.

only a single person). For example, A recently divorced fan of *malḥūn* was speaking to me about marriage and relationships. He said that most relationships do not last; they break up or they remain together unhappily. Then he added that there are some exceptional relationships. He said that some of his friends had marriages in which neither of the two partners could even imagine life without the other partner, "and that--THAT is *malḥūn*," he said.¹⁵⁵ He smiled wistfully, and I began thinking about *malḥūn* as true love. Here *malḥūn* stands for living the dream, for the good life. Here *malḥūn* represents authenticity to oneself.

A Moroccan woman who has her own *cyber* / internet café in Rabat told me that she likes to listen to *āla* and *malḥūn* on Sundays, her one day at home, because it helps her to relax and recenter. For this woman and others, listening to *ṭarab* / classical art music is like slowing down to a simpler time.¹⁵⁶ For singer Fatima Haddad, the poem *Al-Tīhān* / Distance encourages her throughout her busy life as an artist, student, mother, and wife in a region other than that of her childhood. The poem describes longing that arises in interpersonal relationships after extended periods of separation or distance. It serves as a reminder for Haddad and others of friends and loved ones, and the value of these attachments. Both of these women, one a non-expert and one who became a performer herself, find in *malḥūn* a sense of order and a sense of returning to reality or to goodness. Features such as rhythm and meter can provide a sense of order. As for the sense of returning to reality or to goodness, the lexicon and the themes in sub-genres of *malḥūn* engage notions of authenticity that can be mobilized by various social voices.

155. Personal conversation in March 2011, conducted partially in English.

156. She said: *Fīh nalqā rāḥtī*, roughly: I find my peace in it. 10 May 2011.

Appreciating *malḥūn* is a matter of identifying with some part of it--a message, image, sound, person, or event: "every concrete act of understanding is active...Understanding and response are dialectically merged and mutually condition each other; one is impossible without the other."¹⁵⁷ For linguist Allal Ragoug, *malḥūn* links generations. For theater director Mohamed Zouhir, *malḥūn* conveys emotion, especially romance and passion. For singer Abdelali Briki, his interest in *malḥūn* started out as a cool song about soccer, and became a career. For teacher Laila Lamrini, *malḥūn* is her country's greatest art in spoken Arabic. Todorov writes of the constructive processes involved in reception: "the only type of reading undertaken is the mode of construction."¹⁵⁸ Todorov is thinking within a society based on writing, but his idea can be adapted to oral literature if 'reading' is understood broadly as understanding or interpreting any verbal text, even an auditory one.¹⁵⁹ Texts are representational. Readings, or interpretations, vary among audience members because the literary universe is constructed within an individual's mind. My interviews with audience members of *malḥūn* confirm this diversity of understanding. I have come to think of my own mind as one among many that are biased and limited by various experiences that affect my own readings, as well as my understanding of others' readings.

Many Moroccans associate *malḥūn* with their own childhood, and with connections between generations. For men, many accompanied their fathers to evening *dikr* / remembrance sessions, and this shared experience augments their interpretation of

157. Bakhtin (1981): 282.

158. Todorov (1990): 39.

159. Listening repeatedly to a text might even involve more activity than reading.

malḥūn. Women also participate in *malḥūn* at Sufi gatherings, either through domestic preparations and listening to performances from out of sight, or from their own musical nights. Aisha Doukkali combines *malḥūn* performance and a Sufi background.¹⁶⁰ She grew up as the daughter of a Sufi leader in Salé, and developed the knowledge and skills to perform music. Yet her father's Sufi group was for men only, and so she became a *malḥūn* singer, and she continues to perform in public and private events.

A final example of how *malḥūn* becomes linked to childhood and family relations: Singer and teacher Laila Lamrini invited me to attend her niece's wedding in their home city of Meknes.¹⁶¹ I was sitting at one of the many tables as the orchestra was setting up, when one of her relatives came to me, leading his four-year-old son by the hand. He told the boy that I liked *malḥūn*, and asked him to recite for me the poem *Nākir l-Ḥsān* / Denier of Beauty. The little boy sang the refrain. I congratulated him, and they moved on through the crowd. Here *malḥūn* texts function to strengthen family bonds, similar to classical or sacred texts, or children's rhymes. Childrens' performance of a standard text demonstrates skills and sociability, and it informs the child's education and social identity. From the child's perspective, *malḥūn* fits into the same category of knowledge as sacred texts and common proverbs. As the child grows up, he will see that Moroccan television airs competitions for children to recite parts of the Qur'an, but not to recite *malḥūn*. If he is attentive to these genres and their different uses, then he will learn that *malḥūn* has secular meanings and uses for some people. Many people are not so attentive

160. El-Aabioui (2006): 18.

161. 6 May 2011.

to diversity, however, and for them *malḥūn* is limited to one or two sub-genres with a smaller range of meanings.

Similar to these mental associations of childhood and *malḥūn* poetry is the relationship of *malḥūn* to mentorship. For example, bookseller and *malḥūn* researcher Al-‘Arībī took me to Salé one day so that I could meet his bedridden sheikh (teacher). L-Ḥājj Brāhīm Mharzī lay in his bed in a cool, tiled room. More than eighty years old, he told me that he used to perform in the great houses of the area. For his day job, he was responsible for the public market in Salé, overseeing it and ensuring security. He had had one thousand poems committed to memory, he said.¹⁶² Al-‘Arībī described his teacher as *baraka* / blessing and *kinz* / treasure. Mutual appreciation of *malḥūn* can strengthen social bonds that near kinship by choice. Anthropologist Van Vleet concurs: "[r]elatedness occurs in process: the connections of sociality are transformed through habitual activities and talk among individuals and, at the same time, constrained by structured

162. Mharzī’s teacher was Drīs Mbārki, who had been a student of the famous poet Al-Msfīwī from Asfī, who was ‘*tsāwī* and composed poems such as *Al-Ṭūmūbīl* / The Automobile. Mharzī’s favorite poem is *Al-Dīb* / The Wolf by Sheikh al-Jilālī of Marrakesh, and also *Al-Warshān* / The Emissary by Bin Slīmān, and he considered both of them as popular poems, not just his personal favorites. I suspect that these were more popular in the past, perhaps during the years when Mharzī was performing, because they are no longer performed often. They are considered difficult and obscure, at least in the performance contexts that I observed. Al-‘Arībī helped me to understand his teacher, whose voice was faint and hard for me to hear. Al-‘Arībī himself has a lisp, but we are still able to communicate.

discourses."¹⁶³ In this anecdote, *malḥūn* shapes the relationship between Al-‘Arībī and his teacher.

Beyond set texts of poems, *malḥūn* is a social process of groups identifying with one another. These groups include generations, regions, professions and classes, ways of life, and ideologies or worldviews. Bakhtin shows how various social languages do not oppose one another so much as intersect in verbal art.¹⁶⁴ Stewart describes art as an ongoing genealogy of concretization: "...it is the close of artworks that enables the unending open task of such reception. What is this unending task? It is the task of recognition in the light of the other, for every work of poiēsis anticipates and is completed by practices of reception."¹⁶⁵

In addition to the more obvious practices of reception, such as reading or listening, I would like to draw attention to the spectrum of contemporary Moroccans who quote, rewrite, and re-interpret *malḥūn*: "Writing is reading and reading is rewriting or revising in this sense of unfolding--there is no 'all at oneness' under which a revelation appears."¹⁶⁶ For example, writer Zahra al-Zaryīq's *Majnūn hashūma* / Hashuma's

163. Van Vleet (2008): 184.

164. "...language is heteroglot from top to bottom: it represents the co-existence of socio-ideological contradictions between the present and the past, between differing epochs of the past, between different socio-ideological groups in the present, between tendencies, schools, circles and so forth, all given a bodily form. These 'languages' of heteroglossia intersect each other in a variety of ways, forming new socially typifying 'languages.'" Bakhtin (1981): 291.

165. Stewart (2002): 12.

Madman, is a contemporary narrative poem.¹⁶⁷ The title recalls Majnūn, a character famous in Arabic literary traditions for his disregard for propriety in expressing his overwhelming love for Layla. Al-Zaryīq's poem is a long poem of love from a man to a woman. She was criticized for expressing love to a woman (since that opposes sexual norms), but she defended herself by explaining that as a woman, she knows what a woman most wants to hear. Her poem expresses a strong, loyal, absolute love (of any kind in human experience) that she sees current society as having lost. In the foreword, Errachek praises the author for her innovative use of standard expressions and metaphors, and for her careful use of language, adding that her audience smells in her poetry the aroma of *malḥūn* poetry.¹⁶⁸ Indeed, she draws on a recognizable lexicon and collection of images, including the following elements in her own imagined scenario: *sāqī* / cupbearer, *kās* / cup, *khulkhāl* / anklet, *dmālīj* / bracelets. She follows the model of the best-known *malḥūn* songs in Morocco today, such as *Fāṭima* and *Ghīta*, in addressing and describing the female beloved, comparing body parts to fine things and reading them for signs of returned love. To the long nights of longing that are found in well-known *malḥūn* poems such as *Sham'a* / Candle, the artist adds a moon and has the lover tell stories through the night. The beloved also appears in the lover's sleep. The poet recalls a place of popular devotion, *Qubayyat Mulāy Idrīs* / the Dome of Mulay Idris, linking her hero to a kind of local folk Islam. While "normative principles [of *malḥūn*] tend to objectify it...intersubjective processes [such as Al-Zaryīq's evocative poetry] tend to alter it."¹⁶⁹ Al-

166. Stewart (2002): 199.

167. Al-Zaryīq (2005).

168. Al-Zaryīq (2005): 14.

Zaryīq draws on a standard genre to inspire her own creative work. She seeks to affirm certain values, such as love and commitment, in modern society, and *malhūn* provides her with a language that is perceived as authentic, chivalrous, and timeless.

From the examples provided thus far, *malhūn* emerges as both a kind of performance, and as the associations that audiences make through a process of concretization or reception. By defining *malhūn* in this way, virtually anything could become *malhūn*, given that someone recognizes it as such. Some formalists would find this fuzzy, open-ended definition problematic, but viewing it this way allows us to recognize how genres are constantly adapting and changing in society. Recognizing *malhūn*'s mutability would allow some formalists and traditionalists to move beyond the mourning of a so-called dead or dying genre of traditional verbal art in order to recognize how *malhūn* is a functional part of contemporary Moroccan society. It has developed into a cultural style: "a way or mode of doing something."¹⁷⁰ Moroccans use *malhūn* style because it accomplishes social work, voicing numerous perspectives on issues that pertain to Moroccan identity. In this sense, *malhūn* functions like Levine's concept of register: "One of the many methods people have for differentiating situations and marking their moods is to draw on (or carefully avoid) the 'voices' of others, or what they assume those 'voices' to be."¹⁷¹ For example, Chapter Five discusses several debate poems in which two characters argue for different perspectives. The characters clearly represent opposing social views, and the poet reconciles them at the end of the poem. These poems

169. Hanks (1984): 132.

170. Hymes (1974): 434.

171. Irvine (1990): 130.

provide an example of how poets choose certain social types and animate them in order to do some social work, in this case come to terms with differences. This dissertation expands the definition of *malḥūn* from the narrow vision of canonized texts to the broad vision of a cultural form and a performance style.

One of the greatest challenges for me in identifying performances of *malḥūn* was how to establish conventions of this newly broadened genre. The solution came in the idea of a "continuum from sustained, full performance to a fleeting breakthrough into performance."¹⁷² Each performance is framed by a given context, draws on some formal characteristics of familiar *malḥūn* poems, and performs a social function.

On a comic Moroccan television drama, an older male character rejoices at the idea of his son's marriage by singing a line in a sing-song fashion: *a lalla Ghīta, a mūlātī* / O lady Ghita, O my lady. He smiles, moving his head to the tune and swaying slightly while sitting in his living room. The audience understands that the source is *malḥūn*, whether it is a variant of the famous song *Ghīta* (of which there are several), or if it is instead the inspiration for this character's own spontaneous line that sounds like a classic love song. Probably the most famous *Ghīta* is that of Driss Ben Ali (1894-1908 poet of Fes), beginning with this repeated refrain:

qūlū lalla Ghīta mūlātī jūd b-wṣālik ‘al-‘ashīq yā umm l-ghīt

Tell (pl.) Lady Ghita, my lady: Grant your presence to this lover oh raincloud
The character on television has successfully expressed his happiness, drawing on an art that frequently accompanies joyous occasions such as weddings. In this example, we know why the man is singing when we recognize the genre as sung poetry, and we understand his gestures and body language when we recognize the genre as a familiar

172. Bauman and Briggs (1990): 74.

love song. The actor taps into the cultural resources of *malḥūn* for entertainment value and to express his character. This love song brings to mind the many *malḥūn* poets who have sung praise of their beloveds. People could associate it with weddings and their own memories. These multiple associations serve as a social lamination of experience, fixing the frame of a poet singing to his lover over a man thinking out loud about his son's potential marriage. My performative model of *malḥūn* reveals gestalts of experience that dominate mass media in Morocco.

I was dropping off an American visitor at the Hassan II Mosque in Casablanca for a tour.¹⁷³ As I walked out, up a flight of steps, I heard a man coming down the stairs calling to a woman below: “‘Aisha ‘Awīshaaa.” He drew out the last syllable, moving into a higher pitch. This loud, friendly address (of a woman named Aisha, presumably), seemed to me a playful imitation of *malḥūn*, perhaps especially the poem *Al-Ḥarrāz* / The Guardian. The poem has been adapted into multiple theater performances that are televised and performed in theaters, and it stars a girl named ‘Awīsha who is frequently lauded, admired, and named in verse. Like saying *lālla* / Ms. with a woman’s name in a sing-song voice, this is a performance of affection. It connotes the classical love songs of Moroccan memory.

These instances of *malḥūn* that fall outside the formal boundaries of traditional *malḥūn* serve to imbed *malḥūn* into everyday speech. Jauss writes of the horizon of expectations, and how it is determined by three potential factors: norms and conventions, intertextual relationships to familiar works, and the poetic function of language.¹⁷⁴ These

173. 9 April 2011, Casablanca.

174. Jauss (1982): 24. For more on the poetic function of language, see Jakobson's

expectations make reception possible. The innovation of *malḥūn* in forms outside of the traditional genre of poetry leads to further concretizations of *malḥūn*, thus providing a creative social-cultural space. This space then becomes the frame on which speakers draw when they refer to *malḥūn*.

The first chapter focused on formal characteristics of *malḥūn* texts. This chapter discussed the repertoire of *malḥūn* that most Moroccans recognize, several prominent stylistic features, and instances of concretization--reception and processes of interpretation. I discuss the implications of lived experiences of *malḥūn* in the following chapters. Moroccans associate *malḥūn* with Moroccan identity specifically in large part because it occurs in particular performance contexts such as national festivals, projects sponsored by the monarchy, and political protest music. Each of these performance contexts provides a forum for voicing at least one position regarding Moroccan identity, and each context includes at least one performer engaging at least one audience through *malḥūn*. By social voicing, I mean the Bakhtinian idea of using particular language to evoke certain sections of society, relying on the association of certain linguistic elements with its own set of social and historical contexts. The remaining chapters demonstrate how such social voicing occurs, and thus how *malḥūn* functions as a tool for stability, change, and debate in public discourse.

"Linguistics and Poetics," the closing statement of *Style and Language* (1960).

CHAPTER III. NORMATIVE VIEWS AND VOICES

شعار: الملاحون ديوان المغاربة

Malhūn is the record of the Moroccans.

- official motto of the 2011 Fes Festival for *Malhūn*

The above epigraph is a variation on the standard Arabic proverb: Poetry is the record of the Arabs. It makes a claim for *malhūn*, that it expresses Moroccan identity; and it makes a claim for Moroccans, that they have a long-lived literary tradition to record their culture. Both claims are problematic because they are overly simplistic, but they convey a sense of the embeddedness of *malhūn* poetry into Moroccan culture, and they imbue *malhūn* with the weight of official representation. The Fes Festival's choice of motto increases national recognition of *malhūn* as a dominant expression of Moroccan culture, and it places this genre in dialogue with Arabic poetry as representative of a literary heritage. This motto, and the proverb on which it is based, provide examples of how authenticity is constructed. In this chapter, I argue that some of the voices of *malhūn* augment the official discourse of authority and tradition.

The normative vision of medieval Morocco includes *malhūn*, as demonstrated in films such as *Kīd al-nisā* / Women's Wiles, in which a *malhūn* singer accompanies the protagonist prince.¹⁷⁵ Mohamed El-Fasi, signatory of the Moroccan declaration of

175. This imagined past builds on historical evidence. Elegies and poems for state occasions attest to the close relationship between poets and rulers. See for example elegy for Mansour (r. 1578-1859). Al-Maghrāwī (2008): 303; 309. Also 'Urs Mūlay Sulaymān /

independence and minister, taught history and culture to Hassan II and other royal children before writing the authoritative series *Ma‘lamat al-malhūn* / Encyclopedia of *Malhūn*. The late king Hassan II maintained an interest in *malhūn*, with El-Fasi and others performing poetry in the palace. The current king Mohammed VI has not maintained patronage of *malhūn* with court performances like his father. Instead, royal patronage has taken new forms. The poet Salsouli is the closest thing to a court poet today. In 2008, a messenger arrived at his door from the king.¹⁷⁶ He said that there was need of a *malhūn* poem on horses for the program of the annual, week-long international equestrian show that the king hosts in El Jadida. Experts had searched through collections of poetry, but they had not found an entire poem dedicated to horses. Salsouli had one day to compose such a poem. It was printed in a glossy Arabic booklet celebrating horses in history and art.

The monarchy and other voices for unification utilize *malhūn* to advocate for a single national language and identity. The national motto, *Allāh, al-waṭan, al-malik* / God, nation, king presents the monarchical vision of one God, one unified nation, and one king to rule it.¹⁷⁷ It seems to follow that those who advocate such a position would also support one official version of every poem. Indeed, the Academy of the Kingdom of Morocco, which is the nation’s most prestigious intellectual institution, has embarked on

The Wedding of His Majesty Sulayman (r. 1792-1822). Mdaghri (2010): 667. Also elegy for ‘Abd al-Raḥmān (r. 1822-1859). Al-Gandūz (2011): 63.

176. 3 January 2010, Safi. Personal interview.

177. For national motto, see The Kingdom of Morocco webpage: <http://www.nettyroyal.nl/morocco1.html> (accessed 5 June 2013).

a project to edit and publish a *dīwān* / anthology or collected works of every major *malḥūn* poet.¹⁷⁸ These large, leather-bound volumes are green with gold writing and an official seal on the covers. A head editor told me that one of the intended audiences is Arabs in countries other than Morocco. Thus one role *malḥūn* plays in Morocco's public discourse is the national folk literature, a form of poetry that will serve to give Moroccans a long and eloquent past. *Malḥūn* goes to work for state diplomacy and public relations through its dialogue with the Arab world. This role may be compared to any folk movement since the eighteenth century. Old Norse sagas became popular in the nineteenth century, as Norway achieved independence from Denmark and Sweden. So-

178. The first collections are as follows:

- 1) 2008 Anthology of Maghraoui (*Dīwān al-shaykh ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-Maghrāwī*),
a Filali (from Tafilalt) who lived in Fes and died in 1603
- 2) 2009 Anthology of Mtird (*Dīwān al-shaykh al-Jīlālī Mṭīrd*),
A Filali who lived in Marrakesh during the reign of Sulayman (1792-1822)
- 3) 2009 Anthology of Wild Arzin (*Dīwān al-shaykh Muḥammad bin ‘Alī Wild Arzīn*),
A Filali who lived in Fes 1742-1822
- 4) 2009 Anthology of Al-‘Alamī (*Dīwān al-shaykh ‘Abd al-Qādir al-‘Alamī*),
whose tomb is visited in Meknes (1742-1850)
- 5) 2010 Anthology of Mdaghri (*Dīwān al-shaykh Thāmī al-Mdaghrī*),
who was exiled temporarily from Fes to Marrakesh by the Sultan ‘Abd al-Raḥmān
(r. 1822-1859) because Mdaghri's friendship of poetry and carousing with the
prince threatened the reputation of the royal family.
- 6) 2011 Anthology of Gandouz (*Dīwān al-shaykh Aḥmad al-Gandūz*),
who lived in Rabat and died c. 1925.

called German folk tales became popular as the Grimm brothers shaped nineteenth century Germany's movement that presented *Bildung* (cultural formation or education) as the fundamental role of arts. *Malhūn* serves as historical and artistic documentation of the civilization of Moroccan people that preceded colonialism (and indeed, preceded the concept of modern nationhood). This treasury of poetry buttresses the monarchy's claims to authority, displaying the productivity and ingenuity of Moroccans throughout the nation's history.

A final example of official patronage for *malhūn* is state occasions. Many national holidays are potential occasions for *malhūn* performances. *Al-masīra al-khaḍrā'* / The Green March is commemorated for one day every year. It took place in 1975, when thousands of Moroccan citizens marched into Western Sahara territory in order to advocate for its incorporation into Morocco. Groups such as Jil Jilala (and their song *Al-'Uyūn 'īnayā* / [Their] Eyes are My Eyes) provided artistic support. The fact that a young folk band supported the Green March demonstrated, and also increased, Moroccans' general enthusiasm for a political march to welcome the Western Sahara to officially unify with Morocco. National independence and religious holidays are occasions for *malhūn* performances in some public and private venues, as are occasions such as Women's Day in March, or anniversaries sponsored by the Ministry of Education.¹⁷⁹ In such contexts, *malhūn* performances represent Moroccans' loyalty to the monarchy, and the king's loyalty to his people and the customs that unite them. During the tribute concert for Mdaghrī in Fes, I heard comments from speakers such as: "*Malhūn* is not just love and

179. Approximately four days are officially allotted to *'Id al-istiqlāl* / Independence Day and to *'Id al-Aḍḥā* / The Festival of Sacrifice. *'Id al-mūlid al-nabawī* / Festival of the Prophet's Birthday receives about two days of vacation.

religion; it is an expression of the nationalist movement at a historical moment."¹⁸⁰ This comment promotes a vision of a heroic and gifted nation. The same concert included performance of the poem *Al-Muḥāwara* / The Dialogue, which concludes that love of the nation trumps romantic attachments.¹⁸¹

Aside from direct royal patronage, individual fans may also advocate for a vision of unification. I will recall just a single example of a certain bookseller who took me to visit his *shaykh* / teacher.¹⁸² The *shaykh* mentioned a story in which a *jāriya* / consort of a king had requested that the king invite famous *malḥūn* poet Bin ‘Alī Wild Arzin to perform for the women of the palace. Later, on the way back to Rabat, the bookseller told me that there are two versions of this story. In the first, Wild Arzin went to Marrakesh in search of a woman famous for her *malḥūn* singing. There he claimed that he was Wild Arzin from Fes, and the people there told him to sing in order to prove who he was. So he sang a song titled *Mahjūba* or *Ḥajjūba* in honor of this woman. In the second version, the consort of the king requested his presence, and she gained permission from the king to listen from out of sight while Wild Arzin sang this song (presumably named for her). When Mharzī had recounted this story, he had asked me to not record it. So of course I turned off the recorder and set it aside for the duration of the story.

180. The Arabic: *Al-malḥūn māshī ghīr al-ḥubb wa-l-dīn; huwwa ta‘bīr ‘an al-ḥaraka al-waṭaniyya fī laḥẓa tārīkhiyya*. 19 March 2011.

181. The Arabic: *ḥubb al-waṭan muhimman ‘alā l-‘ishq*.

182. 31 December 2009, at the home of Shaykh Ibrahim Mharzi in Salé (in the *mdīna* / old city). Shaykh Mharzi was bedridden and my consultant assisted me in communication. Shaykh Mharzi, may he rest in peace, passed away about a year later.

What did Mharzī risk by telling this story? Perhaps the story suggests that one of the historical sultans of Morocco had a consort who had a romantic relationship with a poet. This relationship would of course have been illicit, and so maybe the story could be construed as slanderous to the royal family. Whether it was Wild Arzin or the consort who prompted this encounter made little difference to me, since either way it is a story of political power vs. romantic attachment, and it is one more variation on the seemingly infinite pattern of *Al-Ḥarrāz* / The Guardian. However, it made a great difference to Al-‘Arībī, for whom various versions were problematic. I could not help but wonder if it was his bookish interests that determined his desire to know the correct version of a given poem or story. Since *malḥūn* is an oral tradition first and foremost, we expect it to include multiple versions of poems or the legends that surround those poems and their makers. Other fans could accept multiple versions as potentially valid, but Al-‘Arībī found it troubling. The orality of this genre poses a danger to the voice of authority and tradition since multiple versions can potentially threaten truth claims.

Groups and organizations can also advocate for a unified vision of national heritage through *malḥūn* performances. A question-answer method, meant to involve the audience, is often employed by contemporary Moroccans for the presentation of *malḥūn* to the general public. For example, in 2005, a dramatic production of *malḥūn* aired on Moroccan television.¹⁸³ The theatrical structure of this program alternated between a group of people in costume discussing *malḥūn*, and various singers who presented different aspects of *malḥūn* (such as famous songs, male and female singers, and recent

183. The televised special was called *Sahrat al-‘īd lil-malḥūn* / Eid Celebration of *Malḥūn*, and was on channel 1 on 11 December 2005, conducted in one of Casablanca's major event spaces.

compositions). The program hosts seemed to represent educated Moroccans appreciating their cultural heritage, while the actors seemed to represent ordinary (perhaps less educated) Moroccans who are learning about *malḥūn* by asking silly questions. The latter entertained even as they are taught, combining concepts and terms from *malḥūn* with ordinary parlance. The announcers tended to use a standard media register, the actors using colloquial Moroccan Arabic, and the *malḥūn* songs using an artistic register.

While reporting on the annual festival for *malḥūn*, the Fes radio station presented a special panel discussion.¹⁸⁴ The panel consisted of *malḥūn* experts--poets, a singer, and researchers (including myself). The show was motivated by a need to know more of one's own tradition. Midway through the show, the host played part of a *malḥūn* song for an intermission. He announced that it was *Faṣl al-rabīʿ* / The Season of Spring. Heads shook around the table in the studio as the experts came to a consensus that the song was in fact *Qaṣīdat Zahra* / the love poem Zahra. The attitude among the experts was one of amusement and mock disappointment, as the slip proved to them the importance of their work. They assume that all Moroccans should be knowledgeable about *malḥūn* because it is their heritage. They advocate a regional genre with an eye to unification.

Since national heritage is so important to government officials and school administrators, it is also incorporated into curriculums for children. Two performers from Erfoud told me of their experience teaching at the prestigious Ifrane summer camp.¹⁸⁵ *Malḥūn* was a required activity for the students, along with *masraḥ* (theater) and *anāshīd*

184. 30 April 2011, at *Idhāʿat Fās al-jihwiyya*, located next to the French Institute in Fes. Hosted by ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Tawzānī.

185. 7 July 2009. I think that the campers at this camp are ages 4-15.

(choir practice, generally religious or patriotic songs). They taught the students Salsouli's comic poems *Portable* / Cell Phone and *Ḥāsūb* / Computer. The students performed the songs, each taking a part in one of the contests depicted in the poems. These songs provide links between "authentic" Moroccan culture and the technology that represents modern life. Another *malḥūn* singer told me about her teaching in a summer camp at Mouhamadiyya (located between Rabat and Casablanca).¹⁸⁶ The children learn dance, theater, and music, including *malḥūn*, in preparation for a final *ḥafla* / performance. She mentioned that this camp is associated with camps in Ifrane and Casablanca, and that one of the feature activities is a *tūmbūla* / drawing with major prizes (like bicycles, for example), thanks to sponsors such as Royal Air Maroc. Supporting endeavors to educate promising youth is a sort of investment in Morocco's future. The investors hope to gain national unity and pride in a common cultural heritage, rooted in a glorious past.

One of Salsouli's newest poems provides a final example of *malḥūn* in the service of national unification. It was inspired by the bombing of Argana café in Marrakesh in 2011. The refrain of *Al-Irhāb* / Terrorism is as follows:

Translation:	Transliteration:	Arabic Text: ¹⁸⁷
The voice of Morocco today calls, friend: Forbidden is terrorism in every place	<i>ṣawt l-maghrib l- yūm ynādī yā 'ashrānī mamnū' l-irhāb f- kull mkān</i>	صوت المغرب اليوم ينادي يا عشريني ممنوع الارهاب فكل مكان

186. 18 March 2011.

187. 28 May 2011. Text from Salsouli.

Salsouli conjures up a single 'voice of Morocco' to represent the entire social spectrum, under the guidance of the nation's official position of zero tolerance for violence. Argana café, located on the edge of Jmā' l-Fnā, provided food and beverages priced out of reach of the lower classes, and displayed a chic atmosphere where tourists and the well-off could rest in the shade. No one would publicly advocate for terrorism, so what is Salsouli's objective? As a citizen and renowned poet, he uses a form of poetry associated with Moroccan language and culture to re-affirm the official position. He unites his audience, through poetic devices, to a common vision in which there is no room for terrorism or any violent action. Even in the path of resistance. Regardless of economic hardship, political injustice, or alternative interpretations of religious texts. In this kind of poem, it appears that there is no room for equivocation. The diversity of voices decreases to a distant whispering.

Malḥūn provides a space for bids of leadership by claims to cultural status. One man, who considers himself a critic of *malḥūn*, explained the way he sees the map of *malḥūn*: Tafilalt is the source, Meknes the trench, Marrakesh the host, and Salé the polisher.¹⁸⁸ His mental map roughly follows the chronological order of *malḥūn*'s movements, and it demonstrates how Moroccans think of *malḥūn* today as much more than a regional tradition. It also maps out regional tensions that play out in some performances of *malḥūn*.

I present here examples of two controversies: the controversy over the formation of a national *malḥūn* association, with Marrakesh as its headquarters and the controversy

188. 18 May 2011, Rabat. Personal conversation.

over *'tsāwī*-style performances and their representation of the Meknes-Fes region. The balance of power between regions legitimates national authority. Regions that jockey for status in the world of *malḥūn* claim a part in this constructed national heritage. They gain a local specialty, expressing their individuality, within the national community.

The Association Cheikh Jilali Mtired hosted a *yawm dirāṣī* / conference in January 2010 to discuss the possibility of a national *malḥūn* association with well over one hundred researchers and performers of *malḥūn* by special invitation. I spoke with Fatima Hadad, who attended as president of the Kénitra *malḥūn* group. She reported to me that twelve groups were represented at the conference, while eight were absent. The organizers, headed by Abderrahmane El Malhouni, had planned to present a proposal at the conference for a national society to unify all the *malḥūn* groups. It seemed to Hadad that the Marrakesh organizers were trying to claim the right to represent all local *malḥūn* groups, with all that would imply for government funding and legitimacy. She opposed the proposal, supporting instead local associations and independent representation. By the end of the conference, a "national" coalition had been formed between *malḥūn* groups from Fes, Marrakesh and Meknes, leaving out groups from other places noted for their *malḥūn* activity, such as Tafilalt, Salé, Kénitra, and Safi. Hadad was granted permission to speak last at the conference, an honor bestowed on her because she is a woman.¹⁸⁹ In her speech, she expressed concerns of small, marginal groups with such eloquence that

189. There were three women in attendance at the conference. In addition to Hadad, there was Hakima Tarek, who is assistant to the president of an association in Meknes, as well as a girl from Safi who performed Salsouli's poem *Nidā' al-malḥūn* / The Call of *Malḥūn*, one of several poems frequently performed by young people in training in *malḥūn* groups today.

some audience members shed tears. What is at stake are issues of authority, ideology, representation and politics, and the contested site of *malḥūn* as cultural heritage provides the space for discussion of these issues.

Meknes and Fes form the *ʿtsāwa* branch of the contemporary *malḥūn* network; they have developed a distinctive performance style.¹⁹⁰ This style is most evident during the final stanza of a given poem. The tempo increases, the narrative ceases, and performers and audience stand together. Musicians play with abandon, and listeners clap, dance, or sing along. In this region, people take evident joy in the use of instruments such as the *ḥdīda* and *ṇḥīr*. The *ḥdīda* is a piece of metal (such as the end of a hoe) played by striking it with a hammer, producing a loud "clang" noise.¹⁹¹ The *ṇḥīr*, a long horn, produces a hollow, insistent sound to punctuate the repetitive invocations to indicate the ending of a song. Both instruments are used to emphasize beats, gradually speeding up to end in a frenetic frenzy. This moment of crescendo represents the ecstasy of Sufi (especially *ʿtsāwī*) rituals.

Sufism is linked to discourses of authenticity and tradition in Morocco, not so much in terms of political authority, but in terms of its role in normative authenticity. I

190. It may not be recognized as one of many styles since it represents "real" *malḥūn* to some people, usually those unfamiliar with other regional performance styles. For a very comprehensive study of the *ʿtsāwa*, including illustrations of instruments, clothing, and other performance props, see Nabti's dissertation, *La Confrérie des Aïssâwa*. Thanks to Chris Witulski for sharing the reference with me.

191. Thanks to Chris Witulski for the technical term.

have found that the ‘*tsāwa*’ Sufi group specializes most in *malḥūn* performances, although other groups may draw on *malḥūn* at least occasionally.¹⁹² The founder of ‘*tsāwa*’, Al-Hādī bin ‘Īsa al-Darrāz (d. 1523), apparently *dakhkhal* (inserted, adapted) *malḥūn* into ‘*tsāwī*’ dhikr.¹⁹³ The ‘*tsāwa*’ developed a distinctive performance style of *malḥūn*, characterized by ending in ecstatic dance and lengthy repetitions of the refrain to reach a state of collective excitement (similar to that present in many sports events). I had interpreted this style as ‘*tsāwa*’ until I heard an alternative explanation: the hammer is used in *qubbāḥī* (high tempo mode), and is related more to the working classes than to the ‘*tsāwa*’. So what I call the ‘*tsāwa*’ performance style is also in a sense the style of a traditional working class. Some do interpret the style as specifically ‘*tsāwa*’, and some disapprove of it on doctrinal grounds, claiming that ‘*tsāwa*’ ritual praises the prophet Muhammad to the point of idolatry, due to influences from Christianity.¹⁹⁴ For the purposes of this study, the reasons for this disapproval are far less important than the fact that a group in Marrakesh found the need to distinguish itself from the ‘*tsāwa*’

192. Traditionally, the *zāwiya* / Sufi venue holds *dikr* / chanting. Performance of more elaborate ‘*tsāwa*’ music takes places during a *līla* ceremony, usually hosted in a home. Aside from the ‘*tsāwa*’ Sufi group, which prides itself on being the only, or at least the most prominent, Sufi group to incorporate *malḥūn* into their events, other groups that are known to draw on *malḥūn* include the Darqāwiyya, Nāṣiriyya, Ḥarrāqiyya, and Hamadsha. Waugh (2005).

193. 17 March 2011, LL Rabat.

194. This opinion was expressed by a man in Marrakesh who has a position of leadership in a *malḥūn* association.

performance style. This style clearly represents regional pride, as demonstrated in the following anecdote.

During the annual festival of Fes for *malḥūn*, I observed the Tafilalt group's performance, and the audience and musicians ended each song with this 'ṭsāwī style. I approached the group after the performance to ask them if they use that style in Tafilalt. They responded that they did not have a *zāwiya* / Sufi center in Tafilalt, but they were able to take on the style to accommodate and charm this audience. The performance was certainly successful in pleasing the audience based on the applause and appreciation.

The connection that Meknes and Fes make between *malḥūn* and Sufism allows both elements broader audiences than they could reach without the other. For example, in one of my visits to a Rabat bookstore, I saw a man poring over the anthology of Hajj Belkadir.¹⁹⁵ He was affiliated with an 'ṭsāwī group, looking for the poem *Fāṭima Zahra*, in praise of Fatima, daughter of the prophet Muhammad. I helped him look a bit, and we did not locate it, but the search demonstrated to me how Sufi groups are often the door by which Moroccans find *malḥūn*.

Sometimes a background in Sufism can help prepare conservatory students to learn *malḥūn*.¹⁹⁶ For example, a boy joined the *malḥūn* class in the Rabat conservatory

195. 8 June 2011.

196. One musician who belongs to an 'ṭsāwa group listed several themes (*aghrād*) in 'ṭsāwa music: 1) praise (*madḥ*) of the prophet Muhammad and his family members, 2) praise of the Sufi leader (*shaykh al-ṭarīqa*), 3) praise of life (*madḥ al-ḥayāt*), and 4) supplications (*tawassulāt*). He said that all *madḥ* / praise in *malḥūn* is in the 'ṭsāwa musical style, with a faster tempo but otherwise a familiar melody or set of melodies (17

one day. Lamrini welcomed him and let him listen. Later she asked him why he was interested in *malḥūn*. He shrugged and said that he liked to sing. He had attended an *āla* class, but did not like it. So far he liked what he heard in the *malḥūn* class. Lamrini asked him to sing a song for her, and he sang the *lutfiyya* sweetly.¹⁹⁷ None of the other students had entered with a *malḥūn* song memorized. He said that he sang in a *ṭwāqa*, an ‘*ṭsāwa* group. One day Lamrini introduced the song *Zāwignā f-ḥmāk* / We take refuge in your protection. The boy did not know the song, but the tune sounded familiar. His face lit up, and he exclaimed: "It's like *mujarrad*!" Lamrini corrected him, saying that it was in *al-ḥiḍārī*. The boy accepted this, mentally building on his extensive foundation of knowledge and experience. Even filling in gaps between his new class and his previous experience did not alter the fact that this new, young student clearly had an advantage over the other students in terms of knowledge of Sufi music.

It is no coincidence that the terminology of Sufism and *malḥūn* overlap. In both terminologies, the teacher is called *shaykh* / sheikh. The Sufi student is called *murīd*, and some people use this term for a student of a shaykh in *malḥūn*. The *malḥūn* student is

March 2011, Rabat). Arabic words for melody here are *maqām*, *qiyās*, and *naghma*, all accepted by the speaker. Songs attributed to ‘*ṭsāwa* music include *Al-Burāqiyya* and *Al-Naḥla* / The Bee, which are put to the same melody, as well as *Al-Shihda* / The Beehive and *Malīka*. According to Dr. ‘Abd al-Ilāh al-Ghazāwī, ‘*ṭsāwa* is a branch of *malḥūn*. (4 June 2011, Rabat. His dissertation on the *awliyā* / saints of Meknes is published in two volumes.) Some of the most famous historical poets of *malḥūn* were members of the ‘*ṭsāwa*, such as Driss bin ‘Alī *l-ḥanash* and Mdaghri. Errachek (2008): 71.

197. 25 March 2011. The song begins *Yā lutf allāh l-khāft*, and is sung in ‘*ṭsāwa* contexts. The boy was thirteen years old, but small for his age.

traditionally an apprentice training to be a young *munshid* (singer) or *ḥāfid* (memorizer). One of the strongest pieces of evidence for the continued relevance of this student-teacher relationship in the broader context of the *malḥūn* network is the heavy presence of *takrīm*, ‘tribute,’ concerts.

Sufism affects many experiences of *malḥūn*. For example, Laila Lamrini's rendition of *Al-Burāqiyya* includes the following excerpts of favorite spirituals after the text of the poem: 1) *yā mūlātī bū Fāṭima..yā lalla yā ḥurra al-nisā*; 2) *allah allah allah..mā kāyn ghīr allah*; 3) *ṭala‘ al-badru ‘alayna*; 4) *qūmū qūmū yā ‘āshqīn allah*; 5) *ḥabbu l-nabbī*; 6) *l-mdām - sqīnā - shfā‘a*. These additions at the end of *l-burāqiyya* are all songs from the ‘*tsāwī*’ tradition, with the exception of *ṭala‘ l-badr ‘alīnā*, which of course predates it. In commercial recordings, Lamrini and others often incorporate *zaghārīd* / trilling and the popular *ṣlā w-slām* / Prayers and Blessings folk song into their recordings. I asked Lamrini about this practice and its purpose.¹⁹⁸ She explained that the *zaghārīd* and *ṣlā w-slām* were the shared idea of the people in the studio and of herself. Especially for *madḥ*, she said, it makes it more special, specifically increasing *l-farḥa* / joy and engaging the audience. She uses it for *l-burāqiyya l-kbīra wal-ṣghīra* (long and short renditions) and for *zāwignā f-ḥmāk* / We take refuge in your protection. Adding these blessings produces a celebratory mood that connotes community--it can bring to mind (even subconsciously) all the past holidays and happy communal occasions of a

198. 17 March 2011, Rabat. Lamrini is from Meknes.

person's life.¹⁹⁹ In Plato's *Ion*, the poet is "inspired and...out of his senses."²⁰⁰ The first century rhetorician Longinus describes the emotional transport of good writing (in his treatise on the "sublime") as an experience beyond the level of ordinary reason. The world of Moroccan *malḥūn* poetry also contains contingents that consider it nonrational, sometimes linking *malḥūn* to religious experience. One name for *malḥūn* is *l-'ilm l-mawḥūb* / gifted knowledge, wisdom granted by the Divine. Sufi notions of ecstasy are similar to the Romantics' notions of the Sublime. Interpretations of *malḥūn* as otherworldly depend to some degree upon the subject matter of the poetry. Whereas *madīḥ* / praise and *ghazal* / love poetry often lend themselves to religious interpretations, *fukāḥa* / comic and *jifriyya* / nationalistic poems usually do not. Similarly, old classic poems and poets are far more likely than new poems to be revered to the point of spiritual ecstasy, for they could be perceived to retain an aura of antiquity and mystique.

Those who descend from families of Meknes and Fes often retain a connection to *malḥūn* despite relocation in order to maintain authentic identity. Fouad Guessous grew up in Casablanca, where he received a French education. He continued his studies in France, returning to Morocco to live a comfortable, largely francophone life. Eventually he discovered *malḥūn* as an adult, and it changed his life, reconnecting him to his

199. Suzanne Stetkevych's *The Poetics of Islamic Legitimacy* (2002) includes analysis in Chapter Six of a poem presented by Al-Mutannabī in 954 as a ritual 'ūd greeting. Memory of annual or repeating events provides ample performative material to Al-Mutanabbī and to performers of *malḥūn*.

200. Lines 533d - 536d. For one translation, see Plato (2005) *Early Socratic Dialogues*, translated by Trevor J. Saunders, London: Penguin Classics.

Moroccan heritage (as he put it).²⁰¹ Since discovering *malḥūn*, he has made a career of translating *malḥūn* from Moroccan Arabic to French. His translations are published, and also available in audio CD format. His family had moved from Fes to Casablanca, and he had grown up without any knowledge of *malḥūn*. Yet this cultural discourse came to form an important part of how he related to Moroccans.

A final aspect of how performances of *malḥūn* energize discourses of authenticity is the Nass El Ghiwane movement. The cultural movement that was spearheaded by Nass El Ghiwane created the initial and powerful connection between nostalgia and the nation. In October 1972, Nass El Ghiwane astounded an audience of more than two thousand people at the Mohamed V National Theater in Rabat.²⁰² The audience members' ages ranged from fifteen to thirty-five years. The ticket revenue came to approximately thirteen thousand five hundred dirhams (in U.S. dollars, about one thousand dollars today, or nearly nine thousand dollars when adjusted for inflation since 1972), and more than eight thousand copies of their album *Al-Ṣṭniyya* / 'The Tea Tray' were sold. In the same theater, the most popular Moroccan singer of the time, Abdelhadi Belkhatat, gained only five thousand dirhams in ticket revenue. Newspapers reported that Nass El Ghiwane was a smashing success.

The band initially consisted of leader Omar Sayyed and his friends in the Casablanca neighborhood Hay Mohammedi, composed of immigrants from other regions

201. 15 July 2009, Casablanca.

202. A recent glossy book for Nass El Ghiwane fans includes a newspaper article from October 1972. Sayed, Marchesani, Joseph, Bervoets, and Lajjam (2011): 70-71.

in Morocco. The young, bell-bottomed artists took their name from a *malhūn* poem: "I asked the jasmine about you / I asked the rose / I asked the friends of Ghiwane about you" (Ghiwane meaning 'love' or 'passion').²⁰³ They styled their Moroccan colloquial Arabic after the language of their parents and grandparents, incorporating proverbs and oral traditions. Their parents nationalists, Omar Sayyed and his friends were "children of independence."²⁰⁴ Yet they lived through the period in Moroccan history known as *les années de plomb* / 'the years of lead' that produced an atmosphere of fear at all levels of Moroccan society, following official independence in 1956 and the death of king Muhammad V in 1961.²⁰⁵ Referring to my map of Moroccan musical genres in Appendix I, Nass El Ghiwane forms the second wave in my understanding of *‘aṣrī* / modern Moroccan music. They came to represent the transition from the French Protectorate of Morocco to the modern nation, the Kingdom of Morocco. Although the ‘Alawī dynasty maintained its authority before and after French rule, the post-colonial experience was traumatic and the political transition to modern statehood was not seamless as the monarchy sought to re-build authority and citizens sought to re-construct a nation to which they could and would belong. In the introduction to their anthology, Hassan Najmi writes that anyone who wants to write about the experience of Nass El Ghiwane will find that this experience makes up a foundational stage of contemporary Moroccan history: as young people, they managed to inspire in Morocco of the 1970s a sense of community, and to express a new cultural and artistic movement that indicated a great transition.²⁰⁶

203. Muhanna (1993): 143.

204. Muhanna (2993): 140.

205. The fear resulted from political imprisonments and civil unrest.

That transition could be equated with modernity, "a label for the transformations brought about through the decline of feudal estates and the emergence of bourgeois societies and nation-states."²⁰⁷ Drawing on similar assumptions to Herder's "that the oldest, most original forms of poetry would also be the most perfect," Nass El Ghiwane strategically selects from the canon of *malhūn*, never to my knowledge ever adapting a poem that was composed by a poet still living.²⁰⁸ Poets of the pre-colonial era came to represent indigenous wisdom, a simpler way of life, and a nobler spirituality than that attained by ordinary people (a higher station or degree, in Sufi parlance). Canon formation comprises part of the construction of modern nations, establishing a separate identity.²⁰⁹ The genre of *malhūn* maintains dialogue with neighboring cultures, but for Moroccans, it also reflects a national folk canon.²¹⁰ Authenticity, according to Bendix,

206. Hassan Najmi in Sayed (2010): 6. Non-Moroccans also interpret Nass El Ghiwane's art as voicing a post-colonial national identity. Martin Scorsese, stumbling across Ahmed El Maanouni's documentary of Nass El Ghiwane (*Transes / Al-Hāl*, 2010), describes his reaction: "As I watched the film, it seemed to me that the band was actually singing their still newly independent nation, their people--their beliefs, their sufferings, their prayers. Of course, that's exactly what they were doing." Sayed, Marchesani, Joseph, Bervoets, and Lajjam (2011): 11.

207. Bendix (1997): 25.

208. Bendix (1997): 37.

209. Shirane and Suzuki (2000): 12.

210. Neighboring cultures include Arabic, African and European influences on Moroccans. Elements of each culture appear in poems, but detailing their presence and

is generated not from the bounded classification of an Other, but from the probing comparison between self and Other, as well as between external and internal states of being. Invocations of authenticity are admissions of vulnerability, filtering the self's longings into the shaping of the subject.

I argue that the Nass El Ghiwane movement performed *malhūn* to answer questions of identity in post-Protectorate Moroccan society. Young rock bands like Nass El Ghiwane deploy their cultural heritage as a decolonization project, providing a sense of authenticity similar to other cultural projects. For example, Baba Yaga and Firebird may be used strategically in Russian literature and popular culture. Furthermore, the Japanese tradition of *kamikakushi* (narratives of supernatural abduction) were not particularly celebrated in Japan prior to World War II, but they have been reappearing in recent literature and blockbuster films, most notably Miyazaki's *Sen to Chihiro no kamikakushi* 'Spirited Away' (2001).²¹¹ It is no coincidence that Miyazaki combines what are perceived as traditional Japanese folk elements with environmentalism and concerns about contemporary society (especially militarism). Societies tend to "go folk" when faced with an "other," responding to the need to distinguish themselves from the "other." This reaction does not exclude movements toward canonization and classicism. Instead, it

purposes is beyond the scope of this study. For African influence, see Bentahar (2009). Some Moroccans perform *malhūn* to non-Moroccan audiences. Laila Lamrini performs and teaches *malhūn* internationally. She experimented with *malhūn*-jazz fusion at the annual summer festival "Jazz au Chellah" in Rabat in 2006. Lamchaheb teamed up with the German group, Dissidenten, to create world music informed by *malhūn* stylistics. For 'tradition as canon,' see Ben-Amos (1984): 116.

211. Schnell, Scott, and Hiroyuki (2003): 185-194.

provides a popular strand of cultural nationalism.²¹² The Nass El Ghiwane movement draws on golden age mythology to construct an 'authentic' Moroccan culture. Just as Miyazaki's films respond to the need to distinguish Japanese viewers from destructive forces unleashed by World War II, so Moroccans had renewed interest in *malhūn* poetry in the wake of 1956 independence and the need to distinguish Moroccan culture from the French Protectorate and ensuing political chaos.

The selective use of pre-Protectorate *malhūn* in the modern style of the Nass El Ghiwane movement appears in several songs (see Appendix III).²¹³ The song *Ḥan w-ashfaq* / 'Take Pity and Care' consists of excerpts from three poems by Sīdī Qaddūr al-'Alamī (1742-1850), despite the fact that their anthology attributes the lyrics to only one of his poems, *Al-Maḥbūb* / The Beloved.²¹⁴ It opens with the refrain from a poem called either *Kīf ywāsī* / How Does One Console or *Al-Maḥbūb* / The Beloved. (I will refer to this poem as Poem A). Then the singers move to lines 1-20 of *Irfaq a-mālkī bi-'abdak* / 'Be Kind, Master, to Your Slave' or *Tāj al-riyām* / 'Crown of Antelopes' (Poem B).²¹⁵

212. For a comparison, consider Japan: "The result of modern canonization was not simply, as in some forms of cultural nationalism, the imposition of a common high culture on a variegated complex of local folk cultures, but rather a mixture of aristocratic (emperor-centered) literature--which had been at the heart of medieval *wagaku* and Edo *kokugaku*--and popular literature, particularly that of the medieval and Edo periods." Shirane and Suzuki (2000): 17.

213. For an additional example, consult Appendix IV for *Mā zīn wṣūlk* / How Delightful Your Arrival Would Be, which Jil Jilala sang.

214. Refer to Appendix IV for full text and translation.

With only slight variations, which are inevitable in renditions of oral traditions, the song moves through lines 54-57 and 35-38 of the same poem. Then it shifts to excerpts from *Al-Mazyān* / ‘The Good’ (Poem C).²¹⁶

These selections were not made randomly or according to personal taste alone. The parts most often selected from these poems are the *ḥarba* and the opening lines because these are the best known lines. These are the lines of a poem most likely to last in community memory through the passage of time, and they are also the lines that will sound most familiar to the broadest audience. Therefore, these lines are often considered the most beautiful lines of poetry, and they become the most meaningful because people can recall them in association with previous performances and experiences.

The song opens with a question:

Translation: ²¹⁷	Transliteration:	Arabic Text:
How to console one whose beloved has left him Mindless at the traces alone	<i>Kīf ywāsī llī fraq maḥbūbuh w-bqā blā ‘aql f-r-rsām frīd</i>	كيف يواسي اللي فَرَقَ محبوبه وبقى بلا عقل ف لرسام فريد

215. Line numbers from official anthology: al-‘Alamī (2009): 243-246.

216. In sum, the components of *Ḥan w-ashfaq* / ‘Take Pity and Care’: *ḥarba* or refrain from Poem A; lines 1-20 of Poem B; lines 54-57 of Poem B; lines 35-38 of Poem B; *ḥarba* or refrain from Poem C; lines 1-5 of Poem C; lines 9-10 of Poem C; line 46 of Poem C; line 25 of Poem C. Full text and translation of Poem B in Appendix IV.

217. See Appendix IV for complete text and translation.

Thus, it calls up two mythical poetic traditions: that of al-‘Alamī in the nineteenth century (pre-colonial Morocco), and that of the Jahili poets of seventh century Arabia.²¹⁸ This technique of intertextuality thus links twentieth century Moroccans to their remembered and imagined past, from al-‘Alamī’s city of Meknes back to the origins of Arabic literature and culture. ‘The traces’ refers to the traces of a campsite once occupied by the beloved’s family. The motif can be traced back to the earliest extant examples of Arabic poetry (most notably the *mu‘allaqa* of Imru’ al-Qays). The image, shape, and shadow represent the memory of the beloved--her visual image, her shadow or phantom, and her presence (*n‘ūtuh* being a word derived from the colloquial verb *na‘t*, to point out or describe).²¹⁹ She stands out from among all the full moons, a classical image for beautiful faces.²²⁰ The beloved is a metaphor for the homeland, beautiful and distinguished among its neighbors. On one level, this is a love song. When one considers the performance context of 1970s concerts and mass media recordings that are played to this day, the song takes on public meanings as well. In addition to the private love story,

218. For more on Jahili poetic conventions, especially the *nasīb* / introduction, see Jaroslav Stetkevych (1994) "Toward an Arabic Elegiac Lexicon: The Seven Words of the *Nasīb*," in *Reorientations: Arabic and Persian Poetry*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

219. I referred to Beaussier's *Dictionnaire Arabe-Français* (2006) for this meaning.

220. To my knowledge, the earliest example of this image occurs in the Quran in the chapter of *Yūsuf* / Joseph.

this poetry becomes a call to oneself and others to have compassion and return to the community and to shared ideals.

A common perception of *malḥūn* poetry is that it uses pre-Protectorate Arabic, thus referring to a pre-colonial reality. It is no coincidence that many adult Moroccans today associate *malḥūn* with their grandparents. The adults of today grew up as the first officially independent generation in the new modern nation. *Malḥūn* offers a (perceived) pre-colonial Moroccan cultural identity. Of course, it is not the only artistic tradition in Morocco that predates the French Protectorate. However, it is the most prominent textual genre in Moroccan public and private space. Nearly all Moroccans, despite their various social situations, seem to like something of the Nass El Ghiwane movement.

The Nass El Ghiwane movement provided the impetus for Moroccans' appreciation of authenticity as a way of constructing Moroccan identity. For many people, *malḥūn* represents Morocco's golden age. A young woman in Rabat, who enjoys films and has developed familiarity with nearly all that Moroccan television has to offer, recommended to me the film *Kīd l-nṣā* / Women's Wiles (1997) because it features *malḥūn*. Based on the folktale 'Aysha bint al-tājjir / Aisha the Merchant's Daughter, it contains many of the elements associated with fairy tales: a beautiful young woman who must overcome a challenge, a prince who must learn an important lesson, love and romance, and a happy ending in which the protagonists are reconciled and united in a prosperous and loving family.²²¹ *Malḥūn* appears throughout the film. The prince's servant sings excerpts of several love songs, notably *Fāṭima*. *Malḥūn* permeates the film with an aura of antique sophistication, a celebration of the beauty achieved with the

221. For references to the folktale, see Pandolfo (1997): 307-310 and Monia Hejaiej (1996): 104-117.

limited technology and knowledge of the past. One could compare *Kīd l-nṣā* / Women's Wiles with several films in the United States, such as *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* (2000) and *The Princess Bride* (1987). Each of these films depict a past, idealized in some ways, using formulaic techniques to evoke the challenges that all people face (such as poverty, lost love, injustice) and to somehow make sense of them. *Malḥūn* thus represents an idealized, pre-colonial past, and the Nass El Ghiwane movement developed this tool for social projects. The Nass El Ghiwane movement voices multiple views. While its evocation of Moroccan authenticity adds to "official" constructions of the nation, the movement also shapes social forces of diversification in ways that I discuss at the end of Chapter Four.

CHAPTER IV. INNOVATION AS RE-VISION

شاين كتب العالم فوق جبين بنادم ؟

What did the All-Knowing write on peoples' foreheads?

Or: What has God ordained for humanity?

- opening line of a *sarrāba* / introduction

Continuing in the vein of demonstrating how such social voicing occurs, this chapter shows how voices of differentiation open space for diverse reimaginings of Morocco and Moroccan society, beyond the vision of unity in Chapter Three. This chapter follows Chapter Three, complementing "official" views with "unofficial" views in *malhūn* performances. Voices of the "unofficial" in Morocco tend to utilize the sub-genre of *ghazal*, relying on its lyric characteristics that celebrate personal emotions and ideas, in order to express views of differentiation. Lyric poetry in *malhūn* celebrates love, wine, and nature, demonstrating tensions between pleasure and social obligations (the established order that determines discretion, mores, and norms).²²² Many interpret wine in

222. For example, *Al-Ra'd* / Thunder by Binslimane expresses his anguish over committing illicit sex acts during the holy month of Ramadan, accompanied by the sound of thunder overhead. Guessous (2008): 286. Erotico-bacchic poems include *Al-Kās* / The Glass by Driss Benali. Guessous (2008): 198; El-Fasi (1990): 219. The most explicit erotica of *malhūn* is, to my knowledge, unpublished. I have heard of collectors of such manuscripts, but I did not seek them out because my study focuses on the most widespread understandings of *malhūn* among Moroccans. Privately guarded texts are, by

Arabic poetry as a symbol of spiritual enlightenment or ecstasy. I argue that wine in Moroccan *malhūn* poetry alludes to anything that brings pleasure: food and drink, music and art, sex and romance, nature and civilization, learning and wisdom, safety and security, health and wealth, status and honor, togetherness and belonging. In addition to love poetry and wine poetry, this sub-genre includes descriptions of nature, especially the season of spring, as well as nostalgic poems of longing. Lyric poetry provides a semantic field of pleasure. In some performance contexts, it advocates democracy, and even secularism. Lyric poetry celebrates the individual's pleasure and its tensions with social obligations or expectations. Some performances of *malhūn* depict diversity in Islam, and others show diversity in language varieties. Together, these innovative performances of normative structures open space for re-imagining Moroccan society. They keep the "authenticity" of *malhūn* fresh, reconstructing it for each era.

Love poetry benefits from shock value in vividly erotic descriptions or simply playing with approaching the boundaries of the illicit and the taboo. During a spring *nzāha* / outdoor performance, I was not surprised to hear the rather common *sarrāba* / introduction, *faṣl al-rabīʿ* / The Season of Spring. The singer, Al-Ḥaḍarī, then sang the classic *Al-Damlīj* / The Bracelet that seemed particularly appropriate since it describes part of Fes. The last verse surprised me, however, by naming whiskey, cognac and champagne. These references to alcoholic beverages represented the utter intoxication and extravagance of the poet's love and admiration for his beloved. The man sitting next to me explained in an undertone that this last bit was added by a violinist named Muḥammad ʿAmmūr. He grinned at me, and he seemed to me to be both sheepish at the later addition to an otherwise classic text, and simultaneously delighted at the violinist's

definition, outside the scope of the current study.

rogue creativity. This kind of innovation counters normative views in the Muslim community, using prohibited alcoholic substances for metaphors that surprise, and so exceed audience expectations.

Controversies over length of *malhūn* performances provide another example of artistic innovation expressing social change. Current discussions revolve around the permissibility and the necessity of shortening *malhūn* songs, adapting them to recording technology (the length of a cassette tape, for example) and adapting them to changing expectations (the length of a typical mp3 file or song on the radio, for example). This topic arose at a *malhūn* conference in Marrakesh in January 2010, musicians and researchers appealing alternately for authenticity and loyalty to tradition on the one hand, and commitment to the audience in a changing society on the other hand. Similarly, concerts in North America used to allow the performance of a single work for an entire concert, but performance practices changed alongside audience expectations. Performance codes can reflect social change. In the case of *malhūn*, shortening performances represents an innovation, loosening the performance code to accommodate changing audience expectations.

I observed one fan of *malhūn* who would benefit from shorter songs when I rented a small apartment for summer 2009, located behind a family house, and sharing its backyard garden. One of the daughters heard of my research, and exclaimed: "You'll get along with Grandma!" So I offered to come visit the grandmother and bring her any *malhūn* music that she liked. She wanted to hear very little of each song. Generally, the refrain and one or two verses were sufficient for her to experience each song again.²²³

223. 19 July 2009. She asked for the popular classics: *Al-Ḥarrāz* / The Guardian (I brought a recording sung by Latifa Amal, a Meknes woman who sung until marrying

Those who call for the freedom to perform shortened versions of *malḥūn* poems claim that listeners today are more accustomed to playing their own music in the midst of their individual schedules instead of relying on poets and tradition to determine performance length.

A second controversy over innovation in *malḥūn* performance revolves around fusion. The most normative performances of *malḥūn* are perceived as including only a single, unified genre. Explicitly incorporating additional genres challenges the normative performance code. Yet it seems to me that the combination of *malḥūn* and other genres attests to the relevance of *malḥūn* in non-normative social contexts. For example, two teenage boys performed rap at a cultural event.²²⁴ The event combined *‘ayṭa* music, *zajal* / spoken word, and rap. The boys introduced themselves, and said that rap is *maghribī aṣḥlan* / originally Moroccan, from *zajal*. They thus provided an alternative origin of rap, one less defined by historical facts and more defined by a sense of authenticity and compatibility. They claimed a place for themselves and their art in the constellation of Moroccan verbal arts. One line of their rap performance included the line *shūft l-ḥabīb fi-l-mnām* / I saw the beloved in a dream. The image and lexicon resonates with classical Arabic, a whole literature of dream theory, mystical texts, and traditional love poetry. Bakhtin helps to explain why people recreate classics:

several decades ago), *Fāṭima* (I brought a recording by Sanae Marhati, a teenage sensation), *Al-Dmlīj* / The Bracelet (again, I brought Sanae, as well as Toulali, who the grandmother preferred), and *Ghīta* by Toulali. I also brought several recordings by Rachid al-Marrakshi (*Ghīta*, *Fāṭima*, *Al-dmlīj* / The Bracelet, and *Al-kāwī* / The Burned One), but the grandmother always preferred Toulali.

224. 13 April 2011, Rabat.

Every age re-accentuates in its own way the works of its most immediate past. The historical life of classic works is in fact the uninterrupted process of their social and ideological re-accentuation...such works have proved capable of uncovering in each era and against ever new dialogizing backgrounds ever newer aspects of meaning; their semantic content literally continues to grow, to further create out of itself.²²⁵

The boys' performance combined metaphors and language that evoke *malḥūn* and the past with other language and stylistics and connote youth and current events. This fusion of the old and the new represents one kind of innovation. Contemporary artists who distinguish themselves by references to Moroccan cultural heritage include Fnayr of Marrakesh, Achkayn of Meknes (whose performances include the *malḥūn* poem *Nākir l-ḥsān* / Denier of Beauty and 'tsāwa music), and Nabyla Maan (who performs covers of Nass El Ghiwane songs and sings *Allāh yā mūlānā* / God, Our Lord a poem by Driss Ben 'Ali.²²⁶

One of the greatest examples of *malḥūn* performances that create new spaces for re-envisioning Morocco is the play *Al-Ḥarrāz* / The Guardian. This play, based on the eponymous *malḥūn* poem, has been performed in Moroccan theaters frequently since 1965.²²⁷ The founding band members of Nass El Ghiwane met in the renowned 1965

225. Bakhtin (1981): 421.

226. Some of this information comes from an interview with a professor of English in Meknes, 7 May 2011. I do not have a copy of the original poem by Driss Ben 'Ali. However, Nass El Ghiwane's rendition is available in Sayed (2010): 42-43.

227. For information on the poem and the text of the play, see Chapter Five.

theatrical production of *Al-Ḥarrāz* / The Guardian, written by Abdeslam Chraïbi (1936-2006) and directed by Tayeb Sadiki (1938 -).²²⁸ It reappears on television, as do other renditions, including the newest production, directed by Mohamed Zouhir in 2011.²²⁹ Each production, especially the most recent, open new spaces for Moroccan diversity through artistic innovation of *malḥūn*.

Theatrical productions of *Al-Ḥarrāz* / The Guardian generally contain the same songs, including *malḥūn* poems and original songs from the 1965 rendition. Characters sing selections from *malḥūn* poems such as *Ghīta*, *Fāṭma*, *Malīka*, *Al-Ḥarrāz*, *Allāh yā mūlānā* / God Our Lord, and *Dīf Allāh* / God's Guest. The 1965 rendition set a precedent for later performances, opening with a line attributed to Ahmed Souhoum: *Fann al-malḥūn fann sātī* / Malḥūn is a brilliant art, and including contemporary songs such as *Yā Māmā*. Both the poem and theatrical productions of *Al-Ḥarrāz* / The Guardian include a series of disguises such as the *gnawi* (Fr. *gnaoui*), a black musician; the *qādī* or *fqīh*, religious judge; and *ʿtsāwa* performers. With each disguise, the lover and his supportive friends try a new strategy to gain entrance to the home of the miserly and wealthy *ḥarrāz* in order to reach the beloved *ʿAwīsha* who the *ḥarrāz* holds against her will. While earlier productions included a fight scene with characters astride wooden horses holding wooden swords, Mohamed Zouhir updated the battle in 2011 to a kung-fu fight scene.

228. I saw this rendition on channel 1 in Morocco in January 2011. At the time of writing, the recording is available online at the following address. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O-WIBpXYSFY>

229. I watched Mohamed Zouhir's rendition in the National Theater twice in February 2011.

The *shīkhāt* (female performers of music and dance) disguise requires men to dance in drag, which amuses audiences in every rendition. In Zouhir's rendition, the *ḥarrāz* asks the *shīkhāt* where they come from, and the disguised men dance and answer: Fes! The audience roars with laughter because the sophisticated city of Fes seems like the most unlikely place of origin for the marginal figures of female performers.

A Marrakesh production includes a joke about the government removing the streets to solve the problem of street children.²³⁰ In the same rendition, children in the home of the *ḥarrāz* ask for internet access and suggest the website alharraz.com. This production, like the 1965 rendition that helped form the Nass El Ghiwane group, takes on current social issues, such as homeless children and internet access, through a medium saturated with historical *malḥūn* poetry. Zouhir's choices continue this legacy.

Originally from Hay Mohammadi where the 1965 production and Nass El Ghiwane debuted in Casablanca, Zouhir served as Sadiki's "premier assistant" for ten years, learning of *malḥūn* through theater.²³¹ He continued his education of *malḥūn* by attending *jalsāt* / regular performances attended by fans and performers in Salé. He frequently uses *malḥūn* in plays that he directs in order to convey emotion and aesthetics.²³² When audiences roar at *shīkhāt* from Fes, it opens a "What if?" moment:

230. This Marrakech production, from the 1990s, was televised on channel 2M. At the time of writing, there are several more renditions posted on YouTube. Each production also circulates in unofficial markets as DVD recordings.

231. 23 June 2011, Rabat. Personal interview.

232. He said that the role of *malḥūn* in his work is "l'émotion" and "*‘ālim l-ḥubb w-l-jamāl*" / the world of love and beauty. 23 June 2011. Personal interview.

Sure, Fes seems like the last place for *shīkhāt*, but what if there were *shīkhāt* from Fes? Sure fights in Morocco do not generally include kung fu, but what if they did? Zouhir's rendition also includes a rap scene, drawing on French rap and hip hop. Its seeming opposition to *malhūn* aesthetics elicit audience enthusiasm (clapping, whistling, whooping, laughter) because of the pleasure derived from heteroglossia and the possibilities that it opens for re-envisioning social life.

For Mohamed Zouhir, *malhūn* is freedom.²³³ He explains that some *malhūn* poetry expresses homoeroticism, citing *Nākir l-ḥsān* / Denier of Beauty, and claiming that it describes a *ghulām*, or young boy, with erotic love, and the poem *Al-Ra'd* / Thunder discusses unsatiated desire during the sacred month of Ramadan. He told me that his favorite poems discuss wine and homosexuality, and his least favorites are *tawassulāt* / poems of religious supplication. *Malhūn* expresses Moroccans' emerging concerns.²³⁴ In our conversation, Zouhir cited multiple poets and poems of *malhūn*, as well as the short story "Bartleby" by Melville, and philosophers such as Levinas, Kristeva, and Barthes. In his theatrical productions, Zouhir draws on poems that expose tensions between social customs and the emotions of individuals. His work voices calls for tolerance of diverse sexual and social orientations and lifestyles.

In addition to theatrical productions, *malhūn* poetry stars in intellectual and artistic circles. It inspires contemporary art, providing the theme for Farid Belkahia's

233. "L-Malhūn huwa l-ḥurriya" / Malhūn is freedom. 23 June 2011. Personal interview.

234. *Malhūn* functions as "*ta'bīr hmūm l-Mughāraba*" / expression of Moroccans' concerns. 23 June 2011. Personal interview.

1996-1999 series of art. For Belkahia, *malhūn* signifies an opening of "Islamic thought and attitude toward love," and his work thus questions "the notion of love in Islam."²³⁵ The series of twenty-one pieces depicts fragmented body parts, not as an act of violence, but in reminiscence of the erotic descriptions of a woman's body in poems, especially in *Al-Harrāz* / The Guardian. The pieces are displayed on a black background, signifying the mysterious unknown. Art critic Rajae Benchemsi concludes that *malhūn* "is a certain way of questioning the self when faced with death and faced with love."²³⁶ Belkahia creates innovative contemporary art, in dialogue with historical *malhūn* poetry, in order to make a space for diversity in Islam.

A newspaper article, analyzing the appeal of Nass El Ghiwane, calls into question popular religious practice. The writer attributes the success of Nass El Ghiwane to four factors: 1) the renewed interest in popular song styles, especially in theater productions by Tayeb Sadiki, 2) the cultural liberation of Moroccans from Western and Mashriqi song styles (comparing Nass El Ghiwane in Morocco to the Rahbani brothers in Lebanon), giving voice to a generation of youth, 3) a political preoccupation with injustice, and 4) a nostalgia for a disappearing past as represented by folk song styles.²³⁷ The article identifies Jil Jilala and Nass El Ghiwane as a single movement, and claims that they constitute a revolution in Moroccan music. The author closes by citing a line from a Nass El Ghiwane song, and then issuing a warning. The line is as follows: "*anā mā nsīt l-*

235. Benchemsi (2001): 84.

236. Benchemsi (2001): 85.

237. Sayed, Marchesani, Joseph, Bervoets, and Lajjam (2011): 70-71. The author of the article is "J.K."

jadba" / I have not forgotten the swaying (of heads, as in mystical trance ceremonies).

The author asks if the musicians are suggesting that the solutions to modern social and political problems is to return to the ceremonies of pseudo-religious reactionaries, such as Hmadcha, 'Issāwa, or Jilāla (all Moroccan Sufi groups). The author then warns the musicians (and more likely, the fans) that encouraging trance ceremonies only numbs people to the realities of injustice. The Marxist position of the author demonstrates Moroccans' mixed reactions to references to folk traditions in contemporary music. Their reactions demonstrate the dialogue present in and around performances of *malḥūn*, reflecting diverse perspectives.

Malḥūn poetry also informs Abdessamad Belkabir's revisionist history. He teaches at a law school in Marrakesh, manages *Sabū* / Sabou publishing house and bookstore, serves as a local politician, belongs to a local *malḥūn* group, and writes books on *malḥūn* with a focus on history. His thinking is influenced by Marxism and socialism, and his books sell well throughout Morocco. His father, Sheikh Mohammed Belkabir, performed *malḥūn* during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Abdessamad gathered his father's manuscripts and has published his father's hand-written *kunnāsh* / song book.²³⁸ In the second volume of his published dissertation, Belkabir critiques the paradigm of the Age of Decline or Decadence (*'Aṣr al-inḥiṭāt*): the notion that Arabic literature in the period following Abbasid cultural dominance and continuing until modernization (roughly 1350-1850) was characterized by stagnation, a lack of eloquence, and sterility.²³⁹ Instead of focusing on a lost literary culture, Belkabir points to the

238. Belkabir (2006).

239. For more on this paradigm, Lowry and Stewart (2009): 1-12.

complexity of the change.²⁴⁰ With the fall of a certain kind of prestigious voice, there arose a new kind of popular voice. As the Abbasid caliphate in Baghdad and the Umayyad caliphate of Andalusia (medieval Spain) lost their political authority, a multitude of colloquial genres flourished. Among the genres that met the need for a new expression was Moroccan *malḥūn* poetry. Belkabir's approach opens a space for re-envisioning vernacular genres and performances. Nass El Ghiwane also revises perceptions of colloquial language varieties and their social contexts.

A final example of how *malḥūn* performances facilitate diversification appears in the art of Nass El Ghiwane and those who followed in their footsteps. In Chapter Three, I discussed how their performances of *malḥūn* can augment the discourse of authenticity and tradition. In this chapter, I show how their performances give voice to diversification. This seemingly dual dynamic in their performance art is precisely the dialogic nature of *malḥūn*. It helps explain the wild success of Nass El Ghiwane, and it also helps explain the long-lasting, broad appeal of *malḥūn*.

The first kind of diversification present in the Nass El Ghiwane movement is the Moroccan vernacular language. In his book on Nass El Ghiwane, Mubārak Ḥannūn explains how their use of language lifted Moroccans' opinions of their spoken language: "We became open, through [Nass El] Ghiwane, to the truth of their message—that our colloquial Arabic has its words and its images, and their ability to rise to beauty and the construction of it, as well as the [ability to] capture what we did not believe it could capture."²⁴¹ He continues to speak of the Ghīwānī lexicon, its fullness and expressiveness, and its reliance on folk expressions and proverbs. He portrays Nass El Ghiwane as

240. Belkabir (2010): 18.

reviving Moroccan spoken Arabic—the language of the earth, of the home, and of the neighborhoods that developed here and there without official permission—elevating it, and returning it to its enlightened potential, even to a sacred and mystical degree.²⁴² For Ḥannūn, the Ghiwane and Jilala folk legacy represents a cultural revolution of populism or socialism. While Omar Sayyed will deny political messages in interviews, the artistic phenomenon that he helped found has nevertheless acquired political significance. It uses stock words and images in new-fangled ways to voice common anxieties, both personal and collective. Unlike the normative views and voices discussed in Chapter Three, Nass El Ghiwane's innovations dialogue less with the Arab World than with other African nations and with nations of Europe and the rest of the world. This trend away from dialogue with other Arabs continues in the direction set by Nass El Ghiwane, but it is limited to voicing "unofficial" views.

Second, the Nass El Ghiwane movement mixes regional varieties of language and culture. Drawing on rock-and-roll and protest music of international youth of the sixties, and combining it with traditional North African poetry, as well as Sub-Saharan musical elements, the group developed a distinctive folk style that appealed widely to Moroccans from various regions. Deviating from the typical Arabic music of their time because it was sung in eastern dialects, they preferred to use a Moroccan Arabic.²⁴³ Other Arabic

241. Ḥannūn (2007): 12. The Arabic: *la-qad infataḥnā, ‘alā l-ghiwāni, ‘alā ḥaḳīqati mufādiḥā anna li-‘arabiyyatinā l-‘āmiyyati kalimātuhā wa-ṣuwwaruhā wa-quḍratuhā ‘alā l-irtifā‘i ilā l-jamāli wa-binā’ihi wa-‘alā l-imsāki bi-mā lam na‘taqīdu annahā qādiratun ‘alā l-imsāki bihi.*

242. Ḥannūn (2007):12-13.

language varieties in the soundscape of Morocco, both in the seventies and in the twenty-first century, are modern standard Arabic (in political speeches, newscasts, and similar contexts in mass media) and Quranic Arabic (in religious contexts). Only by positioning oneself in a dialogic can an artist express non-standard and differentiated intent, activating listeners' awareness. Nass El Ghiwane made an effort to incorporate local artistic traditions from various regions, especially those associated with branches of Sufism.²⁴⁴ Their dialogic performances of *malhūn* reflect dialogues taking place both external and internal to Moroccan culture.

Third, the Nass El Ghiwane movement draws upon lower class voices and adds them to the air waves of mass media. First and foremost, they utilize voices from their working class neighborhood in Casablanca. They also renew historical voices such as *malhūn* poets and the sixteenth century mystic Majdūb, who became one of the greatest inspirations for Nass El Ghiwane and the bands that followed in their practice of adapting folk traditions to contemporary music.²⁴⁵ Using lyrics and topics tested by time, they were

243. In 1970, the Moroccan musical scene was dominated by singers from the east of the Arab World, especially Egypt. They tended to have orchestral accompaniment. Sayed, Marchesani, Joseph, Bervoets, and Lajjam (2011): 73; 305.

244. For the link with Sufism, see the documentary film *Trances / Al-Ḥāl* (2010).

245. Their vanity book mentions Majdūb, who was born between Al-Jadida and Azemmour, and lived in Algeria and Tunis. Sayed, Marchesani, Joseph, Bervoets, and Lajjam (2011): 31. There is also a biographical play by Siddiqui called *Sidi Rahman al-Majdoub*, which is performed often in urban theaters. There is a recording of this play online at the time of writing: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jtsEJmbImVM>.

free to make new sounds and express new ideas. The new sounds came from a variety of instruments and their singing. The new ideas came in the expression of disillusionment and protest. These ideas provided the basis for a cultural movement that sought greater freedom of speech, greater representation of rural and minority groups, renewed creativity among artisans, and a reconciliation of modernity with tradition. Their music was revolutionary, similar to labor strikes of the United States and Europe ever since the Industrial Revolutions, and similar to the songs of African American slaves throughout the Americas, as well as political demonstrations (sit-ins / teach-ins / marches) of the postcolonial world.

In this chapter, I have traced the *malḥūn* trajectory through voices of resistance to total unification. Their performances take place in concerts, in community meetings, and in mass media. *Malḥūn* enables political protest in Morocco, spearheaded by the sixties generation, calling for transparency, non-violence, and valuing the vernacular. If *malḥūn* in Algeria followed the alternative trajectory of *rai* as I have read, then it would provide a productive field for a comparative study of how protest movements employ tradition in verbal art and public performance.²⁴⁶

246. See Schade-Poulsen (1999): 19.

CHAPTER V. DIALOGIC DRAMA

فن الملحون فن ساني .

The art of *malḥūn* is a brilliant art.

- a common opening for *malḥūn* plays, attributed to Ahmed Souhoum²⁴⁷

This chapter concludes the demonstration of how social voicing occurs, this time showing how *malḥūn* functions as a tool for debate and negotiation in public discourse through the sub-genres of comedy and narrative. Whereas the sub-genres of *malḥūn* discussed thus far operate at varying "muted" levels of heteroglossia, comedy and narrative thrive on distinct social voices. By "muted," I mean that if I could graph a representation of how distinct social voices are in every genre, then comedy and narrative would show up on the graph as vastly more differentiated than the voices in the other genres. This is because genres such as panegyric, lament, and lyric do not rely as heavily on distinguishing voices of characters. In comedy and narrative, however, such voices stand out as essential to these genres' conventions. These super-dialogized genres do not accommodate strong political statements as easily as more unified genres do, and so I do

247. The word *sānī* appears in the *malḥūn* dictionary by El-Fasi (1991) with the definition *muḍayya* / lit or lighting (with no diacritics to clarify the meaning). This aphorism is often sung in the opening scene of the play *Al-Ḥarrāz* / The Guardian. I heard it in the educational play about *malḥūn* that was performed in the opening ceremony of the Fes 2011 *malḥūn* festival. I heard it the next day in Abdelmajid Fannish's talk during a panel discussion, and a man from the audience repeated it in agreement. It seems to sum up the genius of *malḥūn* poetry.

not find the sub-genres of comedy and narrative tending toward one particular niche of voices. Instead these genres, more than others, highlight and thrive on the heightened representation of diverse views.²⁴⁸ Bakhtin discusses this kind of variation as "pure dialogues."²⁴⁹ The "pure dialogues" in comic and narrative *malḥūn* poetry feature specific characters, each with its own differentiated voice to express views from some particular sector of society.

248. One additional sub-genre, *hijā'* / invective, can portray multiple perspectives. However, the nature of dialogue in *hijā'* is not a communal round table discussion like comedy and narrative, but a one-sided attack. The opponent appears either as parody or entirely muted. Insulting epithets and lampoons are relatively rare in Moroccan *malḥūn* poetry, perhaps because of their relative inability to promote dialogue. One example is *Al-Dīb* / The Wolf, in which Mḥammad al-Shlīḥ depicts his rival as a hopeless case of ignorance. The poet describes all the effort that he poured into helping and teaching the man, only to see him return to his wild wolf-like state in the end. We never get to hear from the wolfish man, but we probably would if the poet had opted for comedy or narrative. He lived in nineteenth century Salé, and competed in poetry battles. Poem text provided by Fatima Haddad. See Chakroun (2009): 33-41.

249. He differentiates "pure dialogues" from two other devices: hybridization and interrelation. Hybridization involves two or more parts of a single social language in the same utterance, for example an archaic word appearing in an otherwise current statement. Interrelation consists of two social languages intersecting, presenting someone else's style in one's own utterance. Bakhtin (1981): 358.

Comic poems are not the most normative examples of *malḥūn* (and are thus not included in the repertoire of familiar standards in Chapter Two). However, fans of *malḥūn* know them. *Malḥūn* concerts and festivals often include some comic poetry. Weddings, especially those of Tafilalt, tend to include one or two comic poems. Comic poems are also available as CD recordings. The most prolific poet of contemporary *malḥūn* comedy is Moulay Ismail Salsouli.²⁵⁰ In order to appeal to contemporary Moroccans, and also in order to express himself, Salsouli specializes in humorous poetry and poems on current events (such as new traffic laws, AIDS, swine flu, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, terrorism, etc.), as well as a little poetry in romance, politics, religion, and other subjects. His two best-known poems use the classical Arabic practice of *mu'āraḍa*, in which two objects or people compete through a battle of eloquence.²⁵¹ The first poem sets a regular pot against a pressure cooker, and the second poem sets a

250. He holds a seat on the *Akadamiyyat al-mamlaka al-maghribiyya* / The Academy of the Kingdom of Morocco, the highest-level intellectual organization of the country, directly responsible to the king. Representatives of the palace come to his home to request poetry for special occasions. His poetry is performed in mass media, usually by the singer Abdelali Briki of Erfoud. Together, this singer-poet team influences the popular conception of *malḥūn* and they both attempt to make it attractive to the next generation.

251. *Mu'āraḍa* / debate or *mufākhara* / boast match, one of the oldest Arabic poetic forms. For early examples of debate-style poetry, see the work of Al-Jāḥiẓ (ninth century); colloquial Yemeni, Wagner (2009). Nadia Yaqub's *Pens, Swords, and the Springs of Art* (2007) analyzes contemporary Palestinian examples.

standard telephone against a mobile cellular phone. This subject matter allows Salsouli to comment on changes in society and on differences between generations.

For example, Salsouli's debate-style poem *Khṣām l-portable*, places a cell phone against a stationary phone. It opens with the following line: "We have an old phone, functional and sitting in the corner. My grandpa brought it home, and it's been working for seventy years..."²⁵² Salsouli draws in his audience through a homely narrative of the daily realities of modern conveniences interfering with the functional and familiar technologies of yesterday.

In the second stanza, the narrator sets his mobile phone near the old stationary phone, and sits down to read the newspaper. While he is absorbed in the World Cup on the Sports page, he realizes that he hears a voice, and it turns out to be the stationary phone exclaiming that mobile phones increase instances of theft and crime in the streets at night, that they interrupt believers performing their prayers, and so forth:

Translation:	Arabic Text:
Listen portable, transporter of lies... You won't talk until you've eaten expensive, short-lived batteries... You glutton, if you get hungry you won't transfer the news, and if a thief steals you, he'll sell you in a pawn shop and you lose all your numbers!	اسمع يا المحمول حامل لكذب... ما تدوي حتى تكون واكل لطباق غالية وقصيرة عمرها... يا المغرور ايلي جعت ما توصل لخبار وسرقك شقار كيبيعك فالجوطية تضيع النمرا

252. The Arabic: 'andnā tlīfūn qdīm f-l-rkīna tābt w-slīm shrāh jaddī jā buh l-ddār w-khddām hadi sab'īn 'ām...Hand-written text provided by poet.

In the third stanza, the mobile phone retorts that the stationary phone is:

Translation:	Arabic Text:
In the corner forgotten for oh so long, you're obviously respected! Hey gimp, you can't come and go, overwhelmed with cords that just make matters worse. Your speech is so convoluted that no one can hear anything human, even from nearby, and if they do, they find it's a wrong number, you loser!	فالركينة منسي هدا شحال، بان عليك الشرف يا لمشلول ما تمشي تجي، بخيوط مكتّف زايد الفضيحة سرسارك سخفان ما يسمعو شي أدمي قريب ويلي سمعو بعد كيصيب النمرا غلاط يا الغالط...

In the final stanza, the narrator demands that his phones reconcile their differences, and they do so. The phones symbolize two parts of the narrator, the poet, and his society. The poem captures some of the multiple voices and views at work in contemporary Moroccan society, and globally as well to some extent. Songs like this one catch the attention of young people at weddings and other family events, pointing out discrepancies in worldviews and experiences among the audience members (who are likely relatives), entertaining by causing people to laugh at their differences.

L-qīṣṣa l-fukāhiyya / humorous tales rely on personification and characterization. Usually they represent two rivals who conduct a *khṣām* / battle of words, a dialectic plot presenting opposing schools of thought, towns, generations, or ways of life. One feature of these poems is their use of highly imaginary characters for the purpose of humor.

Another popular poem, *Al-Gidra wal-kūkūt* / The Pot and The Pressure Cooker, compares an old-fashioned cooking pot with a new pressure cooker.²⁵³

khṣām kbīr ḥdar tlū bīn l-mjmar a-sā mu‘ayyan waqt l-‘ashwiyya
būtḡāz uw gidra m‘a l-kūkūt fī shhar ramadān
f-nhār ṭawīl bi-lā qiyās jā-nī l-‘aṭash m‘a l-jū‘ wa-l-sakhfa l-quwiyya
ḥsīt bi-l-ma‘da al-dūr ‘ala l-khwa yā ikhwān

A great fight broke out between the coals exactly at the time of evening
The pot and the pressure cooker in the month of Ramadan
In an interminably long day, thirst and hunger assailed me, and a strong
case of dim-wittedness.
I felt my constitution revolving around hunger, O brothers...

This poem and *Portable* above use the literary devices of fantasy and narrative, within the genre of comedy, in order to create a space of dialogue that works on several levels of

253. This is the refrain and my translation. My source text for this poem is a booklet of typed song texts given to me by the group of singers and musicians headed by Abdelali Briki in the region of Tafilalt.

internal debate (individual, social, national, global).²⁵⁴ In this way, poets employ fantasy to entertain and to discuss social issues.

The characters may also be human, as in poems like *l-‘Arūbiyya w-l-mdīniyya* / Country Girl vs. City Girl.²⁵⁵ Another poem, *Al-zimniyya wa-l-‘aṣriyya* / The Old-Fashioned Girl and the Modern Girl, contrasts women educated in modern schools with so-called traditional women, those whose education focused on domestic life. It opens with the following recollection-as-introduction:

254. Other poems of this kind include Salsouli's *l-Mjmar w-l-būṭūgāz* / Tinder vs. Gas and Muhammad b. al-Ḥājj al-‘Alawī al-Harkāwī's early twentieth century poem on candle vs. gas, and his poem on electric appliances, comparing various forms of energy and heat: *Khṣām al-sham‘a wal-gāz wal-kahrabā* / Debate of the Candle, Gas, and Electricity. Chakroun (2009): 93.

255. For Hebrew versions of this sub-genre, see Ben-Ami (1975): 112-115. There he mentions poems on *bnat lyom* / Girls Today, a debate between Pesach and Sukka, and a debate between a servant girl and a free girl.

Translation:	Transliteration:	Arabic Text: ²⁵⁶
Who didn't see the girls the day they set to fighting Two young wisps of girls A modern girl With a covered girl in the hollow. Hey everyone, hear what happened Between the two girls in the fight...	<i>Āsh man lā rā l-bnāt</i> <i>yūm qāmū l-khār</i> <i>Jūj hīfāt ṣghār</i> <i>Shābba ‘aṣriyya</i> <i>M’a l-ḥājiba fal-jūra</i> <i>Yā l-ḥaḍra sam‘ū mā ṣār</i> <i>Bīn jūj l-bnāt fal-ghar</i>	آش من لا را البنات يوم قاموا لكحار جوج هيفات صغار شابة عصرية مع الحاجبة فالجورة يا الحضرة سمعوا ما صار بين جوج لبنات في القهر

256. Chakroun (2009): 129-136. Poet Ḥasan al-Ya‘qūbī lived in Salé in the seventies. His family originated from Doukkala. He sold parsley and cilantro in the street market in Rabat, where he also served as *amīn* / overseer for the selling of all cooking plants such as celery and mint. El-Fasi (1992): 384. I relied on the following recording: *Al-Turāth al-Maghribī al-aṣīl: Fann al-malḥūn* / The Authentic Moroccan Heritage: The Art of *Malḥūn* (n.d.) Laila Lamrini and Hakima Tarek with Khalid Blibel. For other versions, see Mtird (2008) and Wild Arzin (2008). In both cases, the poem is located on pages 339-345, due to consistent organization of poems.

Other examples of comic *malhūn* poems with human characters are as follows: The Old Woman and the Young Woman,²⁵⁷ The Slave and the Free Woman,²⁵⁸ and The Rural Woman and the City Woman.²⁵⁹ Why, in the case of *khṣām* poetry, are the characters usually female? In these cases, gender is most significant in its symbolic capacity. Just as "women frequently become the sign or marker of political goals and of cultural identity during processes of revolution and state-building...when power is being contested or reproduced," so female characters tend to star in debate poems.²⁶⁰ Like representations of women in other cultures, these characters "assume political significance, and certain images of women define and demarcate political groups, cultural projects, or ethnic communities."²⁶¹ In debate poetry, women tend to represent and voice tensions. This poetry maintains the tension in order to prevent the victory of one over the other. Each poem takes a set of contested issues, such as traditional dress vs. modern dress, or traditional education vs. modern education for example. The two types argue, animating the contest. Then the poet's own voice appeals to the characters to stop arguing and reconcile their differences. This repeated drama maintains ambiguity, giving the message that society needs all of its sectors, despite and perhaps because of their differences.

257. Ar. *Khsūmat jūj ‘ayalāt: l-‘ajūza w-l-shābba* by Hajj Ibrāhīm Wild l-Mūshūm. El-Fasi (1990):123.

258. Ar. *L-khādim w-l-hurra* by Al-Gharāblī. El-Fasi (1990):101.

259. Ar. *L-‘arbiyya w-l-mdīniyya*. Wild Arzin (2008): 339. Mtird (2008): 339.

260. Moghadam (1994): 2.

261. Moghadam (1994) 2. For women as symbols of ideals, see Papanek (1994).

The language of comedy can be colloquial and contemporary, to the point of including foreign words.²⁶² This incorporation of foreign elements represents another social tension between a perceived monolingual past and a multilingual and multicultural present. Salsouli's *Portable* comments on the stationary phone, "It connects with loved ones at home and abroad," recalling contemporary Moroccan society's diasporic nature.²⁶³ As for the cellular phone, it parodies materialism and a fascination with the foreign: "...And the fashionable girls startle you in the streets; they have no shame. 'Allo? Allo?...Allo? Can you hear me? Thursday I'm going to Italy. I'm working in Milano so that I can buy a rad car!'"²⁶⁴ Indeed, comedy works through stratification, and so there is

262. Some Moroccans find the use of French and other non-Arabic languages in *malḥūn* disturbing. For example, Fouad Guessous translates *malḥūn* from Arabic to French, but he does not like the idea of *malḥūn* performance entirely in French. For him, *malḥūn* achieves its aesthetic appeal through Moroccan Arabic. I heard of someone in Moulay Idriss, near Meknes and Fes, who has performed *malḥūn* in French. I mentioned this rumor to some of my consultants, and received reactions of repugnance, scandal, disappointment or bewilderment. Poets can include several words of foreign origin, especially in comedic poems, but Moroccans seem to agree that the language of composition must be Arabic. Thus, *malḥūn* serves to unite those who identify as Arabs.

263. Ar. *katuwṣal man l-ḥbāb fad-dākhil ū-khārij*

264. Ar. ...*w-bnāt l-mūḍa yqaffzūk fash-shwāri' mā yḥashmū: Ālū ālū...Ālū sam'ūnī? Nḥār la-khmīs ghādī lal-ṭālyān f-Mīlānū nakhdam bāsh nashrī siyyāra wā'rā!...* Hand-written text by the poet.

more room for foreign words in this sub-genre (and narrative, to a lesser degree) than in any other sub-genre.²⁶⁵

A final example of comic poetry, *Humman*, was performed near the end of the tribute concert for Mdaghri.²⁶⁶ The eponymous loser protagonist disgraces himself on his wedding night by overindulging in alcohol. The story quickly caught the audience's attention and participation, reading along in the provided booklet and/or singing along. Some people also gestured their reactions, for example pointing a scolding finger when the unfortunate protagonist misbehaved. At one point the song achieves humor by grossing out the audience: the new bride finds that her loser groom has not only passed out on the bed without giving her any attention, but he also urinated in the bed. At this (Ar. *lqāṭuh bāyl f-l-frāsh*), the audience laughed, smiled, raised eyebrows, clapped, and some even hollered. During the musical interlude, the clapping was noticeably more vigorous than it had been in previous interludes. According to Bakhtin, the most marked dialogized styles are polemical, parodic, and ironic.²⁶⁷ The heightened dialogism of comic poems thrives on social types in order to make some statement or fulfill some function.

265. "Comic style (of the English sort) is based, therefore, on the stratification of common language and on the possibilities available for isolating from these strata, to one degree or another, one's own intentions, without ever completely merging with them."

Bakhtin (1981): 308.

266. 19 March 2011, Fes.

267. Bakhtin (1981): 274.

The analysis now turns from comic poems to narrative poems. The dialogization of narrative consists of the speech of characters, the perspective of the author, and any inserted genres.²⁶⁸ *Malḥūn* narrative poems include characters and tell stories that consist of a series of events, with identifiable beginnings, middles, and ends.²⁶⁹ For example, *Al-Dmlīj* / The Bracelet begins with a young man who lost his sweetheart's keepsake. His search through the old city of Fes forms the middle, and in the end, he recovers his lost item with all of its significance.²⁷⁰ In *Al-Gnāwī* / The Gnaoui, a lover is forelorn when he discovers his beloved's people have moved (beginning), and so he works as a slave disguised as a black man (middle), wasting away until his beloved and her kin return to save him (end).²⁷¹

268. Bakhtin (1981): 263.

269. One poem, *Al-Tūmūbīl* / The Car, narrates an imaginary journey based on the poet's extensive travels, inventorying more than fifty countries. Guessous (2008): 426-437; Chakroun (2001): 144-150. The most famous of religious narratives and didactic tales are biographies of prophets, such as *Al-Ayyūbiyya* / Tale of Job and *Al-Yūsufiyya* / Tale of Joseph (see Appendix IV for the latter). I also heard a much-appreciated performance (in a Salé café known for the presence and use of illicit stimulants) of *Al-Khulūq*, a poem about prophets and religious history. Also note that in 1997, the 8th annual Sijlmasa festival of *malḥūn* focused on stories: *qīṣaṣ fi-l-malḥūn*.

270. Guessous (2008): 448-465 for text of poem.

271. For poem text, El-Fasi (1990): 223-228; Guessous (2008): 132-141; Mdaghrī (2010): 679-685.

The most prominent example of narrative poetry in contemporary Morocco is *Al-Ḥarrāz* / The Guardian.²⁷² It tells a triangle tale of a young woman whose lover comes in many guises in order to visit her in the palace or great house where she is kept by her guardian, a man with authority over her (depending on the version, her father, uncle, owner, or husband). Both the play and the poem open with Maḥmūd, the heroic lover, determining to find a way to his beloved ‘Awīsha by tricking the *ḥarrāz* who holds her captive:

272. Baghdadi's *Al-Ḥarrāz* / The Guardian has become most popular through its repeated performances in theaters since 1965 (poem text: El-Fasi (1990): 83-90). Other versions include the following: *Ḥarrāz* by Al-Harkāwī, Chakroun (2009): 91-93; *Ḥarrāz ‘Awīsha* by bi-l-Qurshī, Guessous (2008): 386-407; *Ḥarrāz Mājda* by Salsouli, Guessous (2008): 522-551; *Ḥarrāz* by Mtird (2008): 261-274; *Ḥarrāz* by Wild Arzīn (2008): 329-338.

Translation:	Transliteration:	Arabic Text:
I've hidden my pain and secrets...	<i>Ktmt jrḥṭī w-srārī</i>	كتمت جرحتي وسراري
What shall I do about the ḥarrāz?	<i>Ash na'mal m'a l-ḥarrāz</i> <i>Wāsh min ḥīla tanfa'nī</i>	أش نعمل مع الحراز واش من حيلة تنفعني
Is there some ruse that could charm him for me?	<i>m'ah...</i>	273 معه...
O Kind One, O Kind One,	<i>A-laṭīf a-laṭīf kīf na'mal</i>	ألطيف ألطيف كيف نعمل
What oh what shall I do	<i>Wāsh l-ma'mūl</i>	واش المعمول
To deal with the wretch	<i>Bāsh nākhud hād l-makrūh</i>	باش ناخذ هاد المكروه
To the ends of my desire	<i>Fī ghrāḍ lli nahwāhā</i>	274 في غراض اللي نهواها

Then Maḥmūd gathers his friends, and enlists their assistance in a number of attempts to gain entrance to the home of the ḥarrāz through various disguises.

The heroine, 'Awīsha, spends most of her time gazing from the palace window that overlooks the garden. Her first lines in the play, addressed to her maid, are as follows:

273. From play: Chraibi (1981): 11. *Alf shukr* / a thousand thanks to theater director Mohamed Zouhir for giving me his personal copy!

274. From poem: El-Fasi (1990): 84.

Translation:	Transliteration:	Arabic Text: ²⁷⁵
I have no wish to speak...	<i>Mā 'indī shahwa f-klām...</i>	ما عندي شهوة فكلام...
I lost my love without a	<i>Fraqt ḥbībī dūn slām...</i>	فرقت حبيبي دون سلام...
goodbye...	<i>Ba'd mā rāḥ min quddāmī</i>	بعد ما راح من قدامي
Since he parted from my	<i>Lā shrāb ydūz w-lā ṭ'ām</i>	لا شراب يدوز ولا طعام
presence,	<i>Ḥatta širt nḥīla min sqāmī</i>	حتى صرت نحيلة من سقامي!
No food or drink for me--		
I'll waste away for love!		

The rich owner took the orphan girl to his palace out of infatuation, but she still loves her childhood sweetheart who endeavors to reach her by coming to the palace in all manner of guises. The lovelorn 'Awīsha gazing out the window recalls so many other scenes...the woman glancing out of the *mashrabiyya* wooden screens in the opening of Naguib Mahfouz's *Bayn al-Qaṣrayn* / Palace Walk. The prince in *Kīd l-Nisā* / Women's Wiles. Old King Wenceslas. Romeo's Juliet. Rapunzel. The window is both a sign of imprisonment, and a sign of hope for freedom: a visionary moment foreshadowing action and dénouement.

275. Chraibi (1981):12. She speaks in rhymed couplets; I have not included all the lines here.

The *ḥarrāz* / guardian, the beast of humanity, is far too jealous to trust anyone:

Translation:	Transliteration:	Arabic Text:
It would be sin for you to enter my home! ... Don't intimidate me-- Don't push it!	<i>Dārī hiyya ḥrām tadkhulhā...</i> <i>Lā tkhuwfnī lā tqllī l-ḥūt ‘aliyya</i>	داري هي حرام تدخلها... لا تخوفني لا تقلي الحوت عليّ

Overbearing and grasping, the boor has no imagination, hospitality, or grace. One might compare him to Mahfouz's Si Sayyed since both hide the women in their care from the rest of the world, restricting the women's movements, unable to trust. This possessive and smothering love of the *ḥarrāz* contrasts with the selfless, sensitive, elegant love of Maḥmūd (the childhood sweetheart of ‘Awīsha) like night and day.

This story champions at least two ways of being in society. The first relates to wealth, raising generosity and hospitality to nearly sacred levels, making stinginess a sort of crime or cardinal sin. For it offends both social values and religious injunctions. This theme is rampant in literature wherever Islam spread, from tales of the trickster Juḥā to *maqāmāt* humorous anecdotes. The second theme relates to romance, praising passion, self-expression, and undying devotion. Every performance of *Al-Ḥarrāz* produces new concretizations, new aesthetic experiences, of the narrative: "Both the 'repetition' of the performance and its imitation by other directors produce concretizations which are all guided not only by the first performance but also by that concretization that was constituted in the director's reading."²⁷⁶

276. Ingarden (1973): 349.

The plot of *Al-Harrāz* presents various social languages. Bakhtin's "heteroglossia" shows how all languages are views of the world:

...all languages of heteroglossia, whatever the principle underlying them and making each unique, are specific points of view on the world, forms for conceptualizing the world in words, specific world views, each characterized by its own objects, meanings and values.²⁷⁷

The hero speaks a language of chivalrous love, the romantic ideal. The villain speaks a language of miserliness, self-centered distrust of others, and desperate neediness without any grace or generosity. The heroine speaks a beguiling language, hiding her true feelings discreetly from all but her closest allies (such as her maid). She and her maid, the only female characters, use cunning to resist injustice and aid the men working to unite the two lovers. Most of the characters make references to religious discourses, regional discourses, and gendered discourses. Through the dialogical interrelation of these multiple discourses, "they encounter one another and co-exist in the consciousness of real people--first and foremost, in the creative consciousness of people who write [or produce art]."²⁷⁸

So why do Moroccans perform narrative poetry if not to advocate for a certain unified or diversified view of identity? The extra-reflexive effect of heightened heteroglossia arouses consciousness.²⁷⁹ These performances act as social dramas, "dramas of living," a way "of manifesting to ourselves and of declaring where power and meaning

277. Bakhtin (1981): 291.

278. Bakhtin (1981): 292.

279. Turner (1982): 75.

lie and how they are distributed."²⁸⁰ Narrative performances of *malḥūn* facilitate Moroccans' acceptance of their differences, celebrating unity in diversity by redressing tensions:

The redressive phase of social drama frames an endeavor to rearticulate a social group broken by sectional or self-serving interests; in like manner, the narrative component in ritual and legal action attempts to re-articulate opposing values and goals in a meaningful structure, the plot of which makes cultural sense. Where historical life itself fails to make cultural sense in terms that formerly held good, narrative and cultural drama may have the task of *poiesis*, that is, of remaking cultural sense...²⁸¹

In sum, Moroccans continually think through their social identities, in all their contingencies and developments, using the amplified dialogism of comedy and narrative as a tool for debate and negotiation.

280. Turner (1982): 78. Turner's theory of social dramas posits four phases in the structure of every narrative: breach, crisis, redress, and either reintegration or recognition of schism. See also pages 69 and 924. Each of the narrative poems discussed in this chapter could be fitted into his scheme.

281. Turner (1982): 87.

Conclusion

I first learned of Abdessamad Belkabir in 2011 when I saw his book, *Shi'r al-malhūn / Malhūn Poetry* for sale outside of kiosks on Muhammad V Street, which runs through the center of Rabat. I was amazed to see a published dissertation sold alongside current magazines and daily newspapers. Out of curiosity, I asked some merchants if anyone bought the book. They said that yes, it sold consistently. Interested, I asked for clarification: Would you say that you sell about one copy per week? No, they each answered separately: More than one copy per week. I was stunned to find that the Moroccan public could average several purchases of this historical analysis of poetry on just the main street of Rabat in any given week. Of course, that does not even account for the bookstores that stocked the book throughout the city. In other cities, such as Meknes, I was told that the book had sold out.²⁸² It turns out that this book of nearly four hundred pages is only the first of two volumes, both of which developed from Belkabir's dissertation. I wondered what interested so many Moroccans in this dissertation that discusses *malhūn* poetry's themes, its role in forming a medieval middle class that resembled Europe's Renaissance, and many vocabulary items that occur in *malhūn* poetry. Intended for fans and researchers, the book evidently has a wide readership. The sale of Belkabir's books indicates a Moroccan market, a reading public, for all scholarship related to *malhūn*. This reading public complements the multiple audiences for live performances of *malhūn*. This dissertation explains how this engagement with

282. Rabat and Casablanca have more regular supply of publications, with Marrakesh and Fes as close seconds, depending of course upon the publishing house.

malhūn (reading about *malhūn*, or merely intending to do so) is a widespread activity even in a modern city.

Each performance of *malhūn* poetry is situated, framed in a certain social context and field of *habitus*:

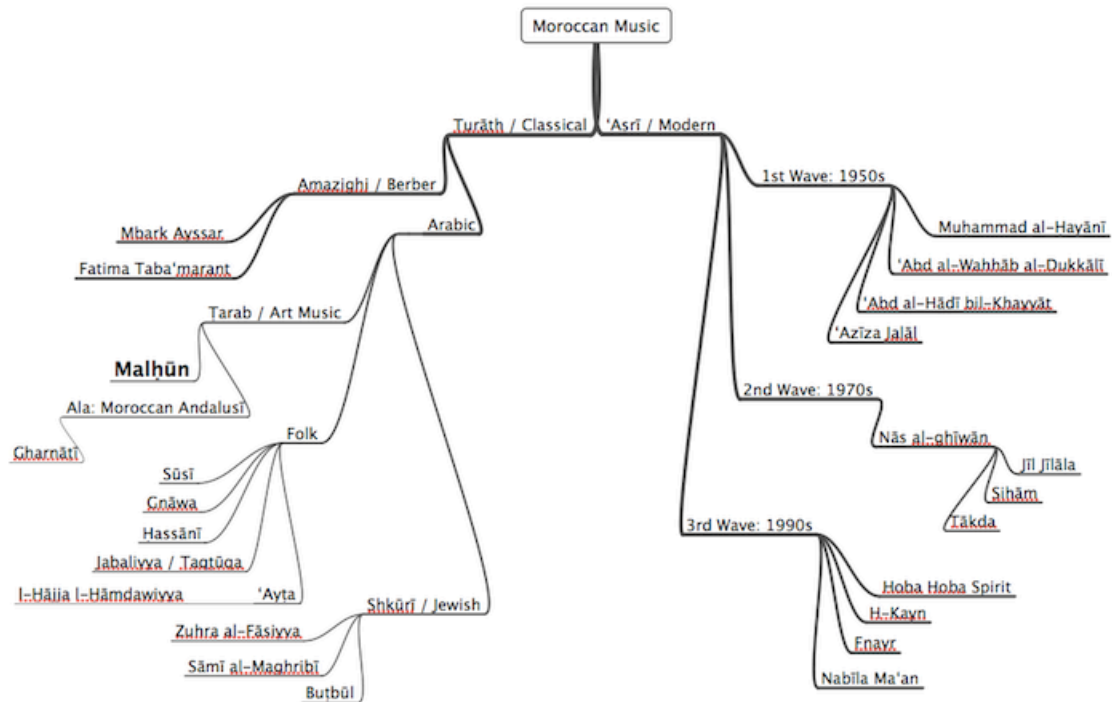
structure and performance are mutually entailing dimensions of...[*malhūn*: it] has a paradigmatic structure as a cultural type, and this is an indispensable part of the meaningfulness of performance. It is also a situated process, whose social and individual features have a determinant impact on paradigmatic structure."²⁸³

Moroccans deploy *Malhūn* for various social projects, including forces of unification, differentiation, and reconciliation. Together, both written instances of *malhūn* and live performances of *malhūn* attest to the relevance of this poetry in places of public discourse, where it fulfills multiple functions.

This dissertation demonstrates the dialogic, in *malhūn* performances, between normative structures and innovations. The limits to how far *malhūn* can bridge ideological differences lies in its perception as urban, old-fashioned Arabic music. The archaic references and expressions of love may offend Islamists or bore young Moroccans. The urbanity may alienate the sizable population of rural dwellers, those who identify strongly with Amazigh language and culture, and anyone who resists mainstream values (particularly the prestige associated with Tafilalt, the royal family, and normativity). Yet *malhūn* maintains considerable influence, and it provides the cultural glue of redress in many situations. The heteroglossia of *malhūn* performances inform Moroccan negotiations of identity and re-imaginings of Moroccan society.

283. Hanks (1984): 133.

Appendix I. Map of Moroccan Musical Genres²⁸⁴



284. This map is my understanding of how Moroccans construct musical genres of Morocco. Moroccan *malhūn* is one of several derived traditions that result from the interaction of Andalusian artistic styles with local art forms. These traditions include: *malhūn* in Morocco, *ḥawzī* in Algeria, *mālūf* in Tunisia and Libya, *ḥumaynī* in Yemen, and *quḍūd* in Syria. Source: Dwight Reynolds, personal communication. The term "Folk" here refers to geographically-limited, localized genres that generally have unknown authors or composers, and is a term used in contrast to "Art" music.

Appendix II. Curriculum for *Ṭarab al-malḥūn* at the musical conservatories of Rabat (*Ma‘had Moulay Rashīd*) and Salé (*Al-Ma‘had al-musīqī li-talqīn al-musīqā wa-l-funūn al-kūryughrāfiyya bi-Slā*), in accordance with the Ministry of Culture

First Year:

- Poem: The Honeycomb / *Qaṣīda: Al-Shihda* by Sīdī l-Khḍar bin l-Khlūf
- Poem: How Beautiful is Your Approach /
Qaṣīda: Mzīn wṣūlk by ‘Abd al-Qādir al-‘Alamī

Second Year:

- Poem: The Rose / *Qaṣīda: Al-Warda* by Muḥammad bin Slīmān
- Poem: The Gazelle / *Qaṣīda: Al-Ghzāl* (also known as *Dābil l-‘yān*)
by ‘Abd al-Qādir al-‘Alamī
- Prelude: Spring / *Sarrāba: Faṣl al-rabī‘*

Third Year:

- Poem: O Knower of the Unknown / *Qaṣīda: Yā ‘ālim l-khfā*
by ‘Abd al-Qādir Būkhrīṣ
- Poem: The Beloved / *Qaṣīda: Al-Maḥbūb* (also known as *Al-Tīhān*)
by Mbārka al-Sūsī
- Poem: Denier of Beauty / *Qaṣīda: Nākir l-ḥsān* by Muḥammad al-Najjār
- Prelude: The Brute / *Sarrāba: Al-Jāfi*

Fourth Year:

- Poem: Longing to Visit You / *Qaṣīda: Shāyiq Nzūrk*
by Muḥammad bin ‘Alī Wild Arzīn
- Poem: Zeinab / *Qaṣīda: Zaynab* by Muḥammad bin ‘Alī Wild Arzīn
- Poem: Malika / *Qaṣīda: Mlīka* by Ḥājj Aḥmad al-Ghurāblī
- Prelude: What Has the Knower Written / *Sarrāba: Shāyn ktab l-‘ālim*

Fifth Year:

- Poem: May God Bless You, O Guide and Healer /
Qaṣīda: Ṣallā llāh ‘alīk yā shaft’ l-‘ṣā l-hādī by Ḥājj Aḥmad al-Ghurāblī
- Poem: Lamp of Beauty / *Qaṣīda: Miṣbāḥ al-zīn* by Ḥājj Aḥmad l-‘Ūfīr
- Poem: The Candle/ *Qaṣīda: Al-Sham‘a*, Muḥammad bin ‘Alī Wild Arzīn
- Poem: The Heart / *Qaṣīda: Al-Qalb (Āsh bāqī mā trūm l-wlāf)*

Sixth Year:

- Poem: God Bless the Prophet /
Qaṣīda: Allāhuma ṣallī ‘alā nnabī bi-l-qāsim by Driss al-‘Alamī
- Poem: Letters / *Qaṣīda: Al-Ḥurūf l-hijāniyya* by Al-Ghālī al-Dimnātī
- Poem: The Server / *Qaṣīda: Al-Sāqī* by ‘Abd al-Qādir al-‘Alamī
- Poem: She of the Dark Lashes /
Qaṣīda: Ghāsiq l-hdāb by ‘Abd al-Hādī Bannānī
- Prelude: Betrayal of the Wine Glass / *Sarrāba: Ghdar kās l-rāḥ*

Seventh Year:

- Poem: The Lutfiyya /

Qaṣīda: Al-Luṭfiyya (Yā luṭf allāh l-khāfī) by Ḥājj Aḥmad al-Ghurāblī

- Poem: The Glass / *Qaṣīda: Al-Kās* by Ḥājj Driss bin ‘Alī
- Poem: Zeinab / *Qaṣīda: Zaynab* by Ḥājj Aḥmad al-Gandūz
- Poem: Souad / *Qaṣīda: Su‘ād* by Ḥājj Ahmed Souhoum
- Poem: The Eyelid / *Qaṣīda: Al-Jifn* by Thāmī l-Mdaghrī
- Prelude: Me, the Broken-Hearted /

Sarrāba: Ana illī bi-l-ghrām qalbī majrūḥ

- Prelude: The Server / *Sarrāba: Al-Sāqī*

Eighth Year:

- Poem: Pray for the Favored Prophet of God /

Qaṣīda: Ṣallū ‘ala l-mufaḍḍal rasūl allāh by Al-Ghālī al-Dimnātī

- Poem: Zahra / *Qaṣīda: Zahra (jayyid l-mahra l-shārida)*

by ‘Abd al-Salām al-Zafrī

- Poem: The Beloved / *Qaṣīda: Al-Maḥbūb (kīf ywāsī)*

by ‘Abd al-Qādir al-‘Alamī

- Poem: The Bird / *Qaṣīda: Al-Ṭīr* by Muḥammad bin Slīmān

- Poem: Ruby / *Qaṣīda: Al-Yāqūta* by Muḥammad bin Slīmān

- Prelude: Prince of Passion / *Sarāba: Mīr l-Ghīwān*

- Prelude: God Bless the Zamzami / *Sarāba: Ṣalla llāh ‘ala l-zamzamī*

Appendix III. Contemporary Moroccan Folk Bands

Band	Folk Songs from <i>Malhūn</i>	<i>Malhūn</i> Source Poem(s)	Author of <i>Malhūn</i> Source Poem	Poet's Historical Context
Nass El Ghiwane / <i>Nās l-ghīwān</i> ('People of Passion')	<i>Han w-shfaq</i>	Medley: <i>Al-Mahbūb (Kīf ywāsī)</i> - and - <i>Irfaq a mālķī (Tāj l-riyām)</i> - and - <i>Al-Mazyān</i>	‘Abd al-Qādir al-‘Alamī	Meknes (1742-1850)
	<i>Hawlūnī</i>	<i>Al-Luṭfiyya</i>	Aḥmad l-Ghrāblī	1880s
	<i>Jūdī b-rḍāk</i>	<i>Yāmna</i>	Muḥammad l-Maṣmūdī	1600s
	<i>Al-naḥla Shāma</i>	<i>Al-Naḥla</i>	Sī Thāmī l-Mdaghrī	d. 1856 in Fes
Jil Jilala / <i>Jīl Jīlāla</i> ('Jilala Generation')	<i>Mzīn wṣulak</i>	<i>Mzīn wṣulak</i>	‘Abd al-Qādir al-‘Alamī	Meknes (1742-1850)
	<i>Al-Sham‘a</i>	<i>Al-Sham‘a</i>	Muḥammad bin ‘Alī Wild Arzīn	Fes 1700s
	<i>Al-Luṭfiyya</i>	<i>Al-Luṭfiyya</i>	Aḥmad l-Ghrāblī	1880s
	<i>Nākir l-ḥsān</i>	<i>Nākir l-ḥsān</i>	Muḥammad al-Najjār	Fes d. 1816-1827
	<i>Al-ra‘d</i>	<i>Al-ra‘d</i>	Muḥammad bin Slīmān	Fes 1700s
Lamchaheb / <i>l-mshāhib</i> ('The Flames')	These three groups were mentioned by consultants as performing folk music, similar to (and clearly inspired by) the above groups, although none could name a specific song from their repertoire as having come from <i>malhūn</i> .			
Rfak / <i>rfāq</i> ('Comrades')				
Siham / <i>l-sihām</i> ('Arrows')				

Appendix IV. Translations²⁸⁵

Refrains (sg. *lāzima* or *harba*)

***Fāṭma* by Driss Ben Ali (Fez, late 19th c.)²⁸⁶**

أرحمني يا راحت العقل ترحامي من جفاك طال سقامي

كيف نبقي حايروانت مسد ليا روفي يا لغزال فاطمة

Have mercy, O peace of mind, have mercy

my illness lengthens in your absence

How is it that I remain in anguish, while you are oblivious, closed to me

Be generous O gazelle Fatma

***Ghīta* by Driss Ben Ali (Fez, late 19th c.)²⁸⁷**

قولوا للا غيثة مولاتي جود بوصالك علعشيق يا أم الغيث

Tell Ghīta my lady

Be generous with your visit upon your lover, O She of the rain cloud

285. For accompanying audio and video recordings, see the website:

<http://www.melaniemagidow.com/link/recordings/>

286. See website to hear the refrain sung by Laila Lamrini.

287. See website to hear entire song sung by Toulali.

***Miṣbāḥ al-Zīn / Lamp of Beauty* by Muḥammad al-‘Ūfir (Rabat, 20th c.)²⁸⁸**

صول بحسن بهاك يا هلال الزين الفتان يا قامت لهفيف يا حدود الورد القاني

كف من التيهان والجفى يا مصباح الزين

Come, with your fine form, O crescent of bewitching beauty,

light of stature, rosy of complexion,

Enough of this absence and separation, O lamp of beauty

Introduction (sg. *sarrāba*)

***Faṣl Al-Rabī‘ / The Season of Spring*
(poet unknown, though some attribute it to Al-‘Alamī)²⁸⁹**

فصل الربيع قبل والوقت زيان، وعلامات الخير للورى بانو

جاد الزمان واضحك ثغر السلوان، والنكد تفاجا وزالت احزانو

بطايح الزهر على كل الالوان، تسبى من راها بشوفت عيانو

والأرض زي حورية من رضوان، معها صاب السرور سلوانو

نحكي عريس وعروسة فالأوان، لبست من ثوب الدباج حيجانو

288. See website to view video of Fatima Zohra Ismaili singing entire song in the 1950s.

289. See website to hear entire song recorded by Touria El-Hadraoui.

صبحت بارزة فكساوي حسن،	دام الله جمالها وحسانو
مهما نظرت بعياني	فكمال زينها ومحاسنها باح كل مكنون
طبعي من الصبا فاني	وقت الربيع توجدني ما بين الحراج مشطون
نشئي الفاظ ومعاني	واهل الهوى يعرفوني ماهر من اصحاب الفنون
واليوم هزني سلطان الغيوان،	ونطق سلطان الربيع بلسانو
دوى وقال لي عول يا إنسان،	تقطف ورد رياضنا وسوسانو
شوف الرياض فاح وزهرت الغصان،	كل غصن يهجي بريحت فنانو
واطيّار ناطقة فدواح البستان،	كل عشيق فشا اسرار كتمانو
انا علاش ما نزها يا حسن،	يا من حبك فالسيار غيوانو
انا فعار داك الخد المزيان،	خدرني من راحنا وكيسانو
مهما رشفت كيساني من يد	من هويت وقلت لها هكذا المضمون
انت كمالت سلواني	وعلى مجيك حلت البشارة يا سراج العيون
بين الاوتار والغاني	والعود والرباب وجنك وكمانجا وقانون
نزهاو في بساط العذرا،	ما بين الحراج الخضرا،
ونشاهد الشقيق والجمرة،	والورد مير بين الوزرا،
ونقول يا غزالي زهرة،	مصاب في جمالك نظرة،
	والكاس بالرحيق يدور

يهنا الساكن المضرور، ناسك يا الريم العذرا، سماوك الغزالة زهرة
وانا يا صبيغ الظفرة، سميتك الغزال زهور

Spring has sprung--It is a beautiful time
signs of goodness have appeared for all to see
Time has been generous, and the mouth of the beloved laughs
Grief has lifted, her sadness ended
Bunches of flowers in every color
Charm the one who sees them with the sight of his eyes
The earth is like a welcoming lover
By which happiness brings his bliss
I would call it a groom and a bride through their stages,
dressed in cloth of fine brocade
She rises, standing out in comely clothing
May God preserve her beauty and his comeliness
Whatever I see in the fullness of her refinement and charms,
divulged is every hidden part.
My nature is childlike--
In springtime you find me stunned by the splendor
I construct expressions and meanings
People of love know me as talented among [*malḥūn*]²⁹⁰ artisans

290. While some variants read *ahl l-fnūn* / artisans, others read *ahl l-malḥūn*, so I have tried to include both variants in my translation.

He carried me away today, the sultan of passion
 He spoke [to me], the sultan of spring
 He spoke, and said to me: Have a care man
 you're picking our courtyard's roses and irises
 See, the garden exudes its perfume and the branches have bloomed
 Every branch trembles at the scent of its Artist
 With talkative birds in the cradles of the garden
 Every lover's secret confidences have come to light
 And me--Why am I unhappy, O Beauty,
 For the one who loves you, the journey itself is his joy
 I'm shamelessly at the mercy of that fine cheek
 It intoxicates me with our wine and its glasses
 No matter how many times I sip the cups filled by the hand
 of the one I love, and to whom I say: "That's the meaning [of love]," still
 You are the completion of my happiness and
 When you arrive, good news alights, O light of my eyes.²⁹¹
 Among the strings and the singing--
 the lute, the *rabāb*, the drum, the violin, and the zither
 We picnic in the meadow of the maiden,²⁹²
 amidst the green splendor,

291. This line contains two puns. First, it paints an image of the beloved arriving on a camel and alighting as good news. Second, the poet addresses the beloved with a word that can mean both 'light' and 'saddle'. The poet mixes caravan imagery with love poetry to entertain the audience skillfully.

in a moment of satisfaction and happiness.
 I see the poppies and the marigolds,
 the flower like a prince among ministers²⁹³
 and the cardamoms and the elder tree
 And I say, my gazelle Zahra, I've been struck
 at your beauty by a glance--
 the glass of wine makes the round,
 The suffering one takes heart--
 Your people O virgin doe
 They named you the gazelle Zahra
 And I--O you of colored braids--
 call you the gazelle Zhor²⁹⁴

292. What is meant here by *al-'udrā* / 'the maiden'? In the Arab East, it would refer to Mary. In Morocco, however, the lack of a native Christian population indicates that the only way the word could refer to Mary is through a link (conscious or unconscious) with the historical culture of Andalusia. 'The maiden' may instead refer to Fatima Zahra, daughter of the Prophet Muhammad, and it might be interesting to investigate the possibility of a development in western Mediterranean folk culture from the Christian Mary to the Muslim Fatima (following earlier interpolations of ancient goddesses into Christianity). In any case, the term in this poem refers most directly to the beloved.

293. One variant says *l-wuzrā* / ministers, while the other says *l-khudrā* / the greenery. Both show the same image of a flower among greenery resembling a prince among his courtiers.

Poems (sg. *qasīda*)

Mā zīn wṣūlk / **How Delightful Your Arrival Would Be** by ‘Abd al-Qādir al-‘Alamī
(Meknes, 1742-1850)²⁹⁵

الحربة:	ما زين وصولك ²⁹⁶	يا البدر الساني لولا جفاك
	وكلام حسودك	والرقيب اللي داير بك
القسم الأول:	في غراض عدولك	خاب سعدي يا محبوبي معاك
	وحفزت قدومك	عن أرسامي وتقال مجيك
	يتسكم شورك	حتى نقول الله عليّ هداك
	وتعود لجورك	والرقيب نراه محاديك
	قصرّ في صدودك	أمالكي لا تحرمني من بهاك
	لأنّي مملوكك	ولا إيلك فيّ حد شريك

294. Zhor is the plural of Zahra. The poet expresses his love with audacity. His attitude to her family should (according to social norms) be respectful, but he effectively says: I love you more than your own family does. He has one-upped and outdone her parents who named her. This playful posturing calls into question social roles.

295. See website to view an excerpt from students practicing this song in the conservatory in Rabat.

296. An alternative version reads: *min zīn uṣūlak*. See Belkabir, *Dīwān*, 220. I have relied on al-‘Alami, *Dīwān*, 233-236 for the Arabic text presented here because it is considered authoritative by Moroccans.

أشَنُّ هُوَ مَضْنُونُكَ	يا اللي تَكَرَّهُ مِنْ يَبْغِيكَ ²⁹⁷
القسم الثاني :	رِيعَ مِنْ شَرُودِكَ
	حَنَ وَاشْفَقَ وَاعْطَفَ لِلِّي هَوَاكَ
	زُورُهُ يَزُورُكَ
	نَبْهُهُ وَنَهْيُهُ وَيَنْهِيكَ
	سَرَّحَ مَسْجُونُكَ
	يا الجَافِي وَأَنْعَمَ لَهُ بِالْفَكَاكِ
	وَأَفْدَى مِيسُورُكَ
	لَأَنَّ حَالَهُ مُحْسُوبٌ عَلَيْكَ
	مَا حَدَّ نَجُومُكَ
	ضَاوِيَةٌ وَهَالَالُكَ بَيْنَ الْفَلَاحِ
	مِنْ قَبْلِ غَيُومِكَ
	يَنْطَفِئُ ضَوْؤُهُ وَيَخْلِيكَ
	وَعَلَى مَغْلُوبِكَ
	جُدَّ وَاسْخَى وَارْحَمَ بَعْدَ الْهَلَاكِ
	وَاطْلُقْ مَطْلُوبِكَ
	بِأَجْرِ الْكَرِيمِ يَكْأَفِيكَ
القسم الثالث :	جِيتْ نَدُوزُكَ ²⁹⁸
	صَبَّتْ عَقْلِي يَا جَافِي مَا نَسَاكَ
	بَاقِي مُحْسُوبِكَ
	أَيُّلَا وَفِي الْأَجَالِ نَبْرِيكَ
	وَخَفِيتْ عَجُوبِكَ
	خَفْتُ يَشْفَاوُكَ يَا وَلَفِي عِدَاكَ
	وَاسْتَرْتُ عِيُوبِكَ
	وَلَا قَدَرْتُ الْكُلَّ نَجِيكَ

297. Some versions include an additional line here (see footnote in English translation below).

298. Some versions insert the word *law* here, changing the meaning to: If I tried to leave you.

ومناش هروبك	عد ليّ نعرف بعد ما نفاك
عاود لي قولك	يا الجافي نعرف ما بك
فاكد مهجورك	متعو بعد الهجرة في بهاك
لنو مملوكك	كيف حتى يقدر يجفيك
القسم الرابع :	مزقت حجوبك،
وبطلت سحورك،	بعد كان رقيبك يحميك
شكيت بحورك،	دخلت بين لماجك وشربت ماك
وغنمت سفونك،	ولا قدر من يسري يفديك
حاربت جنودك،	راح مهزوم الجيش اللي غواك
وقهرت خيولك،	وكان سيفي غادي يبريك
وهزمت جيوشك،	والطرارد منصوبة في حماك
وعبيد صفوفك،	سامعين الامر طاعة ليك
القسم الخامس :	زاوكت فنورك،
ونظرت شموسك،	كن تاج فحضرت ملك
وغنمت سرورك،	منين كنتي دايرني كيف خاك
ولا محبوبك،	صورتني بالنظرة تكفيك

لا غنا يتصرف شاين عطاك	لكن مكتوبك،
خالقي يبليك ويشفيك	من حال عيوبك،
السلام نهيو طيبو شداك	فحدايق روضك،
للدهات أهل الفن وليك	بعبير مسوكك،

Refrain: How delightful your arrival would be²⁹⁹
my radiant moon...if it weren't for your aloofness
and the enviers' talk
and the chaperone who is hurting you

First Verse: In the aims of your rebuker has
my fortune with you been ruined, my beloved
I miss your nearness
to my place; your visits have all but ceased
Straighten up
so I can say God guided you to me
You return to your tyranny
I see your chaperone at your side
Shorten your distancing,
O Possessor [of my heart], don't forbid me from your countenance
For I am yours,

299. If we use the alternative Arabic text of Belkabir, then this hemistich reads: how great would be your family background (*mā zīn uṣūlak*).

and you have no partner in my affection

What are you thinking?

You who seem to hate the one who loves you.³⁰⁰

Second Verse: Stop running away

Be gentle and compassionate and kind with he who adores you

Visit him, and he'll visit you

Notice him and watch out for him, and he'll watch out for you

Release your prisoner

O neglectful one. Be merciful, if only by loosing him

Save your would-be fortunate one

For his lot is on your head³⁰¹

While your stars are still

shining, with your crescent moon in the heavens

Before your clouds,

your light is extinguished, leaving you,

To your vanquished one

give generously and have mercy after the destruction

Free your desired one,

300. Some versions have another line in this stanza, along the lines of: *shan hū maqṣūdak*, 'id lī 'awrīt illī nsāk / What are you aiming at, return to me the healing that you forgot.

301. In the alternative Bilkabir text, this hemistich reads: *lan 'āruh mlyūh 'alīk* / for his reputation is left to you.

and may the All-Generous reward you.

Third Verse: I tried to leave you

but found that my mind, O cold-hearted one, has not forgotten you

I still,

even to the end of time, declare your innocence

I hid your admiration

fearing that your enemies would take advantage

I concealed your imperfections,

and with all that, I still could not reach you

What are you running from?

Tell me so I can know what pushed you away

Tell me your story

O distant one, so I can know what's with you

Your abandoned one has lost [you]

Give him joy after his exile from your pleasure

For he is your slave³⁰²

How could he even be capable of leaving you?

Fourth Verse: I cut through your barrier

and you fell from your heavens

I foiled your enchantments

after your chaperone used to protect you

I endured your seas,

entered your waves, and drank your water

302. Some versions read *maksūbak* / your prize instead of *mamlūkak* / your slave.

I captured your ships at night,
and not one voyager could save you
I fought your infantry,
and the army that failed you was defeated
I conquered your cavalry
and my sword could have taken your life
I routed your armies
who were fighting to protect you
And the servants of your rows,
hearing your wish as their command.

Fifth Verse: I'm beholden to your light,
overwhelmed by your brightness
I've seen your stars--
be the crown in the presence of a king
I've enjoyed your happiness
When you treated me like your brother
Or like your loved one
My image, at a glance was enough for you
But it's the way you are,
and no one can change you.
From the state of your faults,
only my Creator will worsen or cure you.
In the gardens of your courtyard
peace and greetings I convey

their good fragrance, with tones of misk,
for the great people of art and for you

***Irfaq a-mālki* / Be Kind, My Lady by ‘Abd al-Qādir al-‘Alamī (Meknes, 1742-1850)**

ارْفُقْ أَمَالِكِي بِعَبْدِكَ	واعطف يا صابغ النيام
يا بدر النبا مَنْ الغتام	يهديك الله لا تعذب قلبي قاصيت ما كفى
انت الموصوف بالمحاسن	وانا الملسوع بالغرام
وعيتت مكاييد السقام	وما بَرَدَتْ مَنْ جمار فقلبي مُحال تنطفئ
نبات نساھر ليالي	ودموعي حايفة سجام
نبكي ونوح فالرسم	على محبوب خاطري مَنْ جار عليّا ولا عفا
إمْتى يا مالكي نشاهد	حسنك يضوي على الرسام
ما بين مُحافل الريام	ونقول بریت مَنْ علالي ونسيت محاین الجفا

رَغَبُوا تاج لَمَلاح فَيَا	تَحْيِينِي غَيْر بِالسَّلام
وتراعي سيرة لَكْرام	لا خير في اللي جفا حبيبہ ورجا بعد الموالفة

فهواك أَمالكي فنيت	لا حالة كيف حالتني

رضيت بهواك ما شكيت صابر الضرار علّتي
فطريق هواك ما عييت حتى نقضى حاجتي
وايلا انا نلّت ما بغيت منك يا روح راحتي
نبشّر ونقول اللي ما مشا لي تمجادي في البها حرام
وانا ما ضاع عليّ نظام اسمّع قول لحسود فيّا ونكدّب بعد ما صفا
شتقتيني فداك البها وهجرتيني على الدوام
الله آ صابغ النيام
نشر توب الرضا عليا وطوي توب المخالفة
وين العهد والموتق واحنا خاوة بلا خصام
لا تسمع للعدا كلام
واليوم ضحيت لك العدو وعداياك رايقة
نعتادك صاحب لولاعة في بيات الشعر والنظام
وتواشح مالها سوام
ونعرفك صاحب اللطافة والرافة والمساعدة

أما دَوَّزَتْ مَنْ وَقَات كُنْتُ مَغْطِي بِثَوْبِهَا

تسوى الياقوت والثقات والسعد سقام مَنِّهَا

والكاس مدامعه جرات بين الشمعة وضيها

ما تسمع غير خُد وهات والخمرة باح سرها

وين ايام الزهو البيضة وانت سكران بلا منام

سلطان البساط لا هُمَام

مَشْعُوب على عيون العدا وعليك التاج ما خفى

كَدَّوْا مَنْ جَرَّبُوا وَقَالُوا ما دامت للزهو إيام

لو كان تدوم للقُدام لو كان الشمس فسمها تبقى ديما مشرقة

وانت عندي بحال روحي وأنيا ليك كغلام

نخدم ونقبّل القُدام

ونبايع ليك حين ننظر وجهك يا شارد العفا

ما صَبَّرْتَ خاطري كان يدوزك ما رَضَى حَكَام

واحنا في السعد لا سلام

ما بيدي ما ندير نطلب مولايّ جود بالوفا

هادي مُدَّة بلا حساب وانا كامى علايلي

نتسنى ساعة الصواب فيها نقضى مسايلي

نطلب من عاتق الرقاب يجمع بيا غزيلي

سلطاني راشق لَهْداب ناير لَحدود قاتلي

صَرَصَر عَنِّي وشدَّ فيَّ وبَهَضني مالكي وهام

سلطان بساطنا لا هُمَام

تَرَكَ حالي سَقِيم نحل مَقْصوم على المنطقة

لو صبت نعيد لك حالي وانا وحدي بلا زحام

نرقص ونشير بالكمَام

فَعَسَى يرطاب خاطره مكمول الصورة المشرقة

مالِك ما فاد فيك تَمَجِّاد ولا رَغْبَة ولا دُمَام

يا تباع سيرة الغشَام

قادر ربي من الجمال يسلبك يا ناقص الوفا

قدر ربي من بلاني يبيليك بليعة الغرام

حتى تكره الطعَام

وتبوق من ريم الجفا في مهاجك والدادات ساقفة

Transliteration:

Irfaq a malkī bi-‘abdak

w-‘taf yā ṣābiḡh l-niyām

yā badr anbā man l-ḡhtām

yahdīk allah lā t‘addab qalbī qāṣīt mā kfā

inta l-mawṣūf bi-l-mḡāsan

w-ana l-malsū‘ bi-l-ḡhrām

w-‘yit ankāyad l-sqām

w-mā bardat man jmār f-qalbī muḡāl tantfā

nbāt nsāhar l-liyālī

w-dumū‘ī ḡāyfa sjām

nabkī w-nūḡ f-l-rsām

‘ala maḡbūb khāṭrī man jār ‘liyya w-lā ‘fā

imta yā mālī nshāhad

ḡusnak yaḡwī ‘la l-rsām

mā bīn mḡāfil al-riyām

w-nqūl brīt man ‘lālī w-nsīt mḡāyan l-jfā

raghbū tāj l-mlāḡ fiya tahyīnī ḡhīr bi-l-slām

w-trā‘ī sīrat l-krām

lā khīr fī illī jfā ḡbībuh ba‘d l-mwālfa

f-hwāk a-mālī fnīt

lā ḡāla kīf ḡāltī

rdīt b-hwāk mā shkīt
ṣābir l-ḍrār ‘illatī
f-ṭrīq hwāk mā ‘yīt
ḥttā nqḍī ḥājī
w-īlā ana nalt mā bghīt
minnik yā rūḥ rāḥetī
nbshshar w-nqūl illī mā mshā lī
tmjādī fil-bhā ḥrām
w-ana mā dā ‘ ‘liyya nḍām
sma ‘ qūl lahṣūd fiyya w-nkaddab ba‘d mā ṣfā

shtaqtīnī f-dāk l-bhā w-hjrtīnī ‘ala l-dwām
allah a ṣābigḥ l-niyām
nshar tūb l-riḍā ‘aliyya w-ṭwī tūb l-mkhālfa
wīn l-‘ahd w-l-mwattaq w-iḥnā khāwa b-lā khṣām
lā tsmā ‘ lil-‘dā klām
w-l-yūm ḍḥīt lik l-‘dū w-‘dāyā lik rāyqa
na‘tādik ṣāḥib l-wlā‘a f-biyāt al-shi‘r w-l-nḍām
w-twāshīḥ mālḥā swām
w-na‘rafik ṣāḥib l-lṭāfa w-l-rāfa w-l-msā‘fa

amā duwizt man wqāt
kant mghaṭṭī b-tūbhā
tswā l-yāqūt w-l-tqāt

w-l-sa'd sqām minhā
w-l-kās mdām'ūh jrāt
bīn l-sham'a w-dīhā
mā tsma' ghīr khud w-hāt
w-l-khamra bāḥ sirhā
wīn ayyām l-zhū l-bīḍa winta skrān bilā mnām
sulṭān l-bsāṭ lā hmām
mash'ūb 'ala 'uyūn l-'dā w-'alīk l-tāj mā khfā
daqqu man jarbū w-qālū
mā dāmt lil-zahū iyyām
lū kān tadūm lil-qudām
law kān l-shams f-smāhā

winta 'indī b-ḥāl rūḥī waniya līk ghulām
nakhdam w-nqabbal l-qudām
w-nbāyi' līk hīn nanḍar wajhik yā shārid l-'fā
mā ṣbrt khāṭrī kān ydūzk mā rḍā ḥkān
w-iḥnā fi-l-sa'd lā salām
mā b-īdī mā ndīr nṭlab mūlayya jūd bi-l-wfā

hādī mudda b-lā ḥisāb
w-ana kāmī 'lāylī
ntsina sā'at l-ṣwāb
fīhā nqḍā msāylī

nʔlab man ‘ātiq l-rqāb
yajma‘ biyya ghzīlī
sulṭānī rāshiq lahdāb
nāyr lakhdūd qātlī
ṣarṣar ‘annī w-shidd fiyya w-bhaḍnī mālki w-hām
sulṭān bsāṭnā lā humām
trak ḥālī sqīm nḥl maqṣūm ‘ala l-mnāṭqa
law ṣibt n‘īd lik ḥālī w-ana waḥdī b-lā zḥām
narqaṣ w-nshīr bil-kmām
f-‘asa yarṭāb khāṭruh mkmūl l-ṣūra l-msharqa
mālak mā fād fīk tmjād w-lā ragħba w-lā dmām
yā tbā‘ sīrat l-ghshām
qādir rabbī min l-jmāl yslbak yā nāqiṣ l-wfā
qdar rabbī man blānī yblīk blī‘at l-ghurām
ḥatta takrah l-ṭ‘ām
w-tbūq man rīm l-jfā f-mhājk w-l-dāt sāqfa

Translation:

Be kind, my lady, to your servant
 Have a care, O you of colorful eyes
 O moon of news that brightens the darkness
 God guide you--Don't hurt my heart--it's suffered enough
 You're the one known for charms;
 I'm the one who's been smitten by passion

I've passed through the stages of illness

No ember in my heart cooled or could go out

I spend my nights sleepless,

my tears flowing endlessly

I cry and moan in the darkness

for my beloved who tries my patience with no mercy

When, my lady, will I see

your countenance shining on the traces

from among the droves of gazelles

and I can say: I was healed of my illness, and forgotten any coldness

O crown of beauty, want me!

Greet me, at least say hello

Observe the traditions of the noble ones:

They are no good who leave their lovers after letting them get used to intimacy.

In your love, my lady, I melted away

There's no case quite like mine.

I welcomed your passion without complaint,

withstanding the pain of my illness

In the path of your love, I never tired

until I'd accomplished my aim

And if I gave you a gift, I never expected anything

from you, O my heart's comfort.

I'd be happy and say:

My attentions to beauty weren't lost.

No judgment was lost on me;

hearing the haters' talk, I find myself lying after being cleared

I miss your splendor--you've left me alone

O god, you of the colorful eyes

Put on the clothing of graciousness, and put away your clothing of discord

Where is the covenant and the commitment--we are like siblings, not enemies

Listen not to the hater's talk

Today you see me as your enemy, but really our enemies are celebrating this

I grant your talent in poetry and composition

and rhymes beyond compare

And I have known your kindness, graciousness, and assistance

The time I've spent

warmed by her clothing of kindness

is worth emeralds

and our happiness was enriched by it

The glass, its tears flow

over the candle and its light

One hears only: Pour! Here, take it

The wine's secret is divulged

Where are the white days of pleasure, when you were so drunk that you did not slumber

The sultan of the yard, without worries
Too popular for the eyes of the enemy, and on you a crown one could not miss

They believed those who tried it out, saying
there are still many days for fun and play
If time were coming to an end,
then the sun would remain always in the East.

You are to me like my own soul, and I am to you like a servant

I work, accepting whatever I can get
I find myself obeying you whenever I see your face, O you who forgets to forgive
My mind could not rest without thinking of you and was incapable of judging you
When we had been at peace and so happy
Nothing remains for me but to ask my lady to be generous in fidelity

All this time with no account
and I'm wasting away
I hope for a moment of fairness
in which will be resolved my problems

I ask that the Vigilant One
will reunite me with my little gazelle

My beloved of the long eyelashes,
her face lit up, slaying me
She yells at me, shaking and startling me, my lady,
The sultan of our yard, so upset

leaving me, ill and wasting away--so confused

If I could, I would recount to you my story, alone and in private

I would dance, gesturing with my sleeves

Your mind would eased, my beauty

What's with you, nothing seems to please you

O you of the unjust way

My lord is capable of such beauty, and can surely snatch you O you who lack fidelity

My lord, who let me fall in love, can surely do the same to you

Even to the point of you losing your appetite

and suffering in your heart's center from separation, a listless self

Al-Burāqiyya by Shaykh Al-Makkī b. al-Ḥājj Al-Qurshī (d. 1933) of Azemmour

Refrain:

اللهم صلي على النبي راكب البراق محمد عين الوجود الطه

Transliteration:

allāhuma ṣallī ‘la l-nbbī rākib l-burāqi

muḥammad ‘ayn l-wjūd al-ṭāhā

Translation:

May God send blessings on the Prophet, the rider of the Burāq

Muḥammad, the essence of being, the Ṭa-ha

Verses:

نبدأ باسم الجليل نعم الحي الرزاقِ
ونقول أفاهم اللغا هلت دمع رماقي
ونُطرز حلة المي صفها
محمد جوارحي سباها
حب في دواخل الحشا مزق مير سفاقي
لا حولَ لي فيما قضاها

حب الماحي سيد البشر
ضي هاللي شامخ القدر
في قلبني رصا محبة
ربي أمرنا بطاعة
في الميزان وساعة الحشر
كاع ندوز في شفاعه
هذا هو الزكي التكي لحبيب التاقي
مَن جا بالقرءان والنبأ هل
هذا هو مَن سرا الحضرة نعم الخلاقِ
وحماه بالجنود مَن سماها
وعطاه الحوض واللوا والتاج والبراقِ
الدمة هو طبيب داهها

زيد فصلاة يامن حضر
هو النبي طيب الذكر
على الهادي نعم الحبيب
تنجا بصلاة من اللهيب
هي الخير وغاية الستر
مَن تولّع بها ما يخيب
صلاة حسنة مضاعفة عشرة بالتحقاق
يسعد ويفوز من زكاها

بها أمرنا وصلّى رب الفلاقِ

وملاكُ صلاة في سماها

هذا محمد النذير جا عظيم الأخلقِ

بالمُعجزات اللا قضاها

لولاها لا كانت الكوان

مَنْ تسخير عالم الغيوب

لا كرسي لا لوح لا بيان

لا قرءان نزل في الكتب

لا سما لا أرض لا ميزان

لقحت بها ساير العشوب

صلّى الله عليه عَدما مكتوب فلوراقِ

مَنْ آيات وكل مَنْ قراها

وَعَداد البرق والنجوم وضي ولغساق

سبحان الخلاق مَنْ نشاها

عداد الساكنين جملة في كل أفاق

وعدّ اللي يمشي على وطاها

نهيت الحلة الرّايقة

والمحي لي اللي هديتها

بمعاني والفاظ واتقة

زمرش التاريخ عامها

واسمي بالمكي ولا يقي

غير النسبة من شرافها

يا مكون الكوان كون لي يوم التلاقي

ما ننظر محبة ولا فراها

بي الهاشمي العربي سيد لخلقِ

وبجاه السلكة ومن قراها

وسلامي للشياخ بالطيب من كل دواقي

ما هب نسيم على فضاها

Transliteration:

nabda basm l-jlīl na‘m l-ḥay al-rrazāqi

u-nṭarraz l-ma sfaha

w-nqūl a-fāhim l-lugha hallat dam‘ rmāqī

Muḥammad jwārḥī sbāhā

ḥubb f-dwākhil l-ḥsha mazzāq mīr sfāqī

lā ḥawla lī f-mā qdāhā

ḥubb l-māḥī sīd l-bshar

fi qalbī raṣṣā mḥabba

ḍay hlālī shāmkh l-qdar

rabbī amarnā bi-ṭā‘atuh

fal-mīzān w-sā‘at l-ḥshar

gā‘ ndūz fī shfā‘a

hada huwa l-zakī ltakī laḥbīb al-tāqī

man jā bil-qur‘ān w-l-nbā hal

hada huwa man srā l-ḥaḍra na‘m l-khalāqi

w-ḥamāh bil-junūd man smāhā

w-ṭāh l-ḥawḍ w-l-lwā w-l-tāj w-labrāqi

al-dummatu huwa ṭabīb dāhā

zīd f-ṣlātu yā man ḥḍar

‘ala l-hādi na‘m l-ḥbīb

huwa l-nabbī ṭayyib l-dkar

tanjā b-ṣlātu man l-lhīb
 hiya l-khīr w-ghāyat l-star
 man twalla' bi-hā mā ykhīb
 ṣlātu ḥasna mḍā'fa 'ashra bil-taḥqāq
 yas'ad w-yafūz man zkāhā
 bihā amarnā w-ṣalla rabb l-falāqi
 w-mlāku ṣalāt f-smāhā
 hada Muḥammad al-nadīr jā 'aḍīm l-akhlāqi
 bil-mu'jīzāt allā qḍāhā

 lūlāhu lā kānt l-kwān
 man taskhīr 'ālim l-ghyūb
 lā kursī lā lūḥ lā byān
 lā qur'ān nḥal fal-ktūb
 lā smā lā arḍ lā mẓān
 laqḥat bihā sāyr l-'shūb
 ṣalla llāh 'alīh 'add mā maktūb flawrāq
 man āyāt w-kull man qrāhā
 wa-'dād l-barq w-l-njūm w-ḍay w-laghsāq
 subḥān l-khallāq man nshāhā
 wa-'dād l-sāknīn jamla fī kull afāq
 w-'add illī ymshī 'ala wṭāhā

 nhīt l-ḥulla al-rāyīqa

w-l-māḥī līlū hdīthā
ba-m‘ānī w-alfāḍ wātqa
zamrash al-tārīkh ‘āmhā
wa-smī bi-l-Makkī w-lā bqā
ghīr al-nasba man shrāfhā
yā mkawwan l-kwān kūn lī yūm al-talāqī
mā nandar maḥabba w-lā frāhā
bi-ḥayāt l-Hāshmī l-‘arbī sīd la-khlāqī
w-bi-ḥayāt al-sulka w-man qrāhā
wa-slāmī lal-shiyākh bi-l-ṭīb man kull dwāqī
mā habb nsīm ‘lā fḍāhā

Translation:

We begin with the name of the Majestic, yes the Ever-Living, the Provider

We embroider a pure garment

And we say to those who understand the language, my eyes teared up

Muḥammad my insides did captivate

Love in the inner regions, my prince caused it to rip

I have no control over that which he appoints

Love of the all-powerful, lord of humanity

in my heart compounds affection

Shine, my crescent moon, of lofty capabilities

my lord directed us to respect

the Balance and the Day of Congregation

I spend time totally in prayer

That's the right thing to do, meeting with the Loved One

who brought the Quran and its message

That's the one who established devotions and ethics,

and who was protected, with his armies, by the heavens

who made him the protector, the champion, and gave him a crown and the Burāq

and the covenant of protection, he is the Doctor who gave treatments

Increase in prayer, you who attend

the Calm, the Loved One

He is the prophet, and good to remember

sending blessings on him will protect you from the fire

It is goodness, and the essence of covering one's faults

Those who practice it passionately will not fail

A prayer worth ten times the blessing of a good deed

Gives happiness and success to the one who offers it

We were told to do it, and the Lord of the Dawn

and all the angels sent blessings on him from the heavens

He is Muhammad, the forerunner who came with great ethics

and miracles unable to be repeated

If not for him, there would be no creation

of the world from nothingness

No throne, no slate, no message
No Quran revealed in the books
No heaven, no Earth, no Balance
to which all peoples were related
God's blessings upon him, as much as is written in all the world,
and all the verses, and all those who read and recite them
And the vastness of lightning and stars, the heavenly lights and the twilight
May the creator who established them be praised
And all the creatures together, on every horizon,
And all that walks upon the earth's depressions

I have completed the brilliant garment
and the prophet is the one to whom I offer it
with its meanings and crafted phrases
to which history testifies
My name is al-Makki
just a nickname, for the honor it carries
O creator of the creation, be for me on the Day of Meeting
So I see only affection
By the life of the Arab Hashmi, the paragon of all creatures,
and by the life of good conduct, and those who read and recite it
My greetings upon the shaykhs, with incense of every scent,
blowing a breeze upon its expanse

الحرية :

عدروني ياهلي ولاش تلموني هاكدا فحالي	سيرو خليو كل حال يسير على حالو
انا الكاوي بكى مخفي والكي في الدات ما برالي	مَنْ بعد الا كويت وبريت جراحي طالو
نحيا حتى يهولوني ونعود نصارع الليالي	وجراح الحب والهوى والهجرة لا زالوا
وجراح الهيج والغرام وغيوان الشاطنات بالي	هادو من غير شك زادو للقلب هوالو
بيهم مشطون كيف راد وقدر نعم الغني العالي	والسابق لي نصرّفو والوعد بمجالو
لا زالت ملازم الصبر صبري صبر العيس في الليالي	ورفدت حمول الهوا وتكدرت حمالو
لاش تلوموا هكدا في حالي وانا بكرا يحيي نلالي	شاكي باكي من هموم قلبي وهوالو
ترى مول الغرام تايه ترى حالو يعود سالي	ترى يبقى هميم هايم ما كيزهالو
الغرام مصيبتو مصيبة واصغا لي يا لايمي صغالي	الغرام صعيب سولّ ماله اللي جالو
الغرام يطوّع السلاطن لاسيما اللي بحالي	ديما غيضان على العاشق ما كايترالو
طوّع كسرى على نصالو وما قاسا مع الهلالي	ومطوّع سيف الغلام العبسي ومثالو

البعض فالناس كايلومو ويزيدو في ملام حالي	والبعض فالناس تايقولو هدا عمّالو
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303. Video by Sanae Marhati available online at time of writing:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eAmYAPcbRys>

هذا حالي مع الهوى متولع بمحاسن الغوالي
وايلا نجبر هل الفن بحالي يستحسنو قوالي
وايلا نجبر هل اللوم يلوموا ويبطلوا شغالي
لاموني في فعائلي وفعالهم عدا على فعائلي

كمّن واحد لامني ومكتر عجيبي مع سالي
عارف تحقيق سيرتي ما نبغض انسان ما نبالي
قابط حدي وكانساعف الغرام اللي في دخالي
لولا الغرام ما نخمّ ولا نسها على شغالي
ويدوق الحب غير مرا ولا يجبر عليه والي

ما يعدر غير من كوى وتجرّح كيفي من الغوالي
ملكوني بالبهها ولاحو ليا جسمي فيا مالي
هما هما اللي سباب هولاي هما دوا علالي
هما هما راحتني فالدنيا هما راس مالي
ارا من لا يحبهم رويوه ليا ويا متالي

يتروّع ساكني وينطق من غير حوالو
يبكيو على بكاي ناس الغيوان وايسالو
ويقولوا يا لطيف راه تقوى تخالو
لاكن غدا كلها يتحاسب بأفعالو

يدوي فيا كايخفّف دنبي بأقوالو
ما نحسد حد واللي غاتب ولا نصغى لو
ونخمّم فيه حكايتو واش يكون فصالو
يبلي من لام فيه ويجرّب ما يجرالو
ويدوق غصايصو وسمو وجراح نكالو

بنجال اللي يحبهم كاوي يا عمدالو
ملكوني يا عشيق بحسن الخد مع خالو
هما هما ياك العشيق عليه يسالو
انا بعد خديم ليهم فاش ما قالو
ايجي حتا يفيدني ونفيد ونسالو

لرباب الفن حق دوهات العلم ينالو	نهيت بيات حولتي وسلامي ما فاحت الغوالي
غزلي فرضاه همام فاس تصفات خبالو	طابع ليهم في زمني ولقح غصني وزيان حالي
وكمل قصدي فاش جاني دي اللي قالو	زرتو ورويت من مدادو وعمر جبجي وعاد مالي
والي ججكدك سير خليه فقبح فعالو	يا حفاضي ورا عليا ولغي الجحود لا تبالي
زوج وسبعين زيد سبعا للاسم كمالو	اسمي موضوع في حروف أبجد لمن صغا قوالي
يعفو عني ولا يحافيني جل جلالو	نطلب من لا ينام مول القدرا من لا خفاه حالي

Forgive me, my people--why do you blame, when I am in such a state?

Go away, and let each one's state take care of itself

I am the burned one, hidden and crying, my injury festering

After I was burned then cured, my wounds remained

I revive until they worry me, and again I spend my nights awake

And the wounds of love, passion and desertion continue

The wounds of turmoil, lust, and love occupy my mind

No doubt they have increased the heart's concerns

I am stuck with them, just as the Lofty Enricher ordained

Before me, that I might carry out my destiny

Patience is still necessary -- my patience is the patience of a camel in the nights

I have carried the burdens of love, as was ordained.

Why do you criticize me in this condition, while I am pacing with my wounds

Complaining, Crying from the problems of my little heart

You see the one lost in love, you see him seem to get better,

You see him at times pensive, amused by nothing

Love is a catastrophe--hear me out, critics

Love is hard, ask those to whom it has come

Love brings sultans into line, not to mention those like me,

Forever upset, giving no rest to the lover

It turned Caesar on his blade, and how great was the suffering of the Hilali

It turned the sword of the 'Absi slave, and others just as great

Some people criticize, and just make me look worse

Others say "it's his nature."

That's the way love is with me, passionate about the fine qualities of the monsters

Who upset my body, causing it to babble nonsense

Only artists understand what I'm saying

They cry right along with me, for they are people of passion like me

The haters just blame and criticize,

Saying "O my god, see he's crazier than ever!"

They censure me for the things I do, but they've done so many more things than me!

Never mind, tomorrow each one will be held accountable for their own deeds.

O how many have rebuked me, never failing to amaze me with their questions

The more he speaks against me the more my faults seem to lighten

I know the truth of my behavior. I don't accuse anyone, and I'm not a busybody.

I don't slander anyone, and I don't listen to those who do.

I mind my own business, content with the love within me

I think through the story of it, wondering if it has a solution

If it weren't for passion, I would neither worry nor neglect my work

What goes around comes around, and haters eventually fall into the same problems--

He tastes love but once, but finds no helper in it,

And he tastes his last breath and its poison, and the wound of its blade.

No one forgives who hasn't suffered, wounded like me by dear ones

By the poor eyes that loved and get scorched time and time again

Their splendor takes possession of me

The loveliness of a cheek with its beauty mark possessed me, my love

They caused my worries, and they treated my illness

They, my love, don't they ask about their lover?

They are my comfort in this world, and my living

For ever after, I work for them in any way they request

Show me the one who does not love them, my friends

May he come help me, and be helped by me, and we can wonder together

The verses of my ode have come to an end, and for as long as the dear ones diffuse their
aroma

My greetings to the artists, for they have attained knowledge

Obedient to them all my days, my branches are cultivated and my condition beautified

Blessings upon my gazelle, the patron saint of Fes
I visit him and am enriched
And my intention comes full circle in what was said to me
My apprentice (lit. memorizer), tell of me, avoid repudiators, and be of one mind
Those who speak against you, leave them in the ugliness of their ways
My name is made clear in the numerical letters, to those who listen to my speech
Two and seventy, add seven for the full name
May the One who does not sleep, the Lord of Destiny, from whom nothing of my
condition is
Hidden, forgive me and receive me kindly, the Splendid the Glorious

Story of Joseph / *Al-Yūsufiyya* - Arabic (early 20th c.)³⁰⁴

Refrain:

اسمع سيدنا يوسف وحديثو صحيح ترتابو نهار غبروه اخوتو اعمى اباه ببكاه

304. This Arabic text is reproduced as it was written in Salsouli's handwriting. I acquired the text from Abdelali Briki, who tends to work with Salsouli as his singer. I asked for this text by name on behalf of a Moroccan colleague who asked me to get it when he heard I was visiting the famous singer and collector of *malḥūn*. This text is moderately well-known and is celebrated among fans, especially those in religious circles. Many thanks to Kristen Brustad for her assistance with this translation.

First Verse:

بسم الكريم هيا مفتاح الريح جات فكتابو خيار ما نقول فنظمي نبدا باسم الله
نهيب الصلا عن طها قد الضيا وغيهابو وعداد ما خلق ربي فارضو وساكن سماه
وعلى الاشراف وزواجو ونصارو ولامة صحابو والتابعين يجعلنا ربي في حماه ورضاه
من بعد الصلا نتفرج فحديث صح من جابو حديث سيدنا يوسف وخوتو وقصة باه

Second Verse:

نبي الله سيدنا يعقوب نكد على ما شاف في منامو عن ولدو
واصبح عليل سيدنا يوسف لمجد واعطاه الله زين وعقل من رشدو
قال لباه ريت فمنامي بالجذ الشمس والقمر والكواكب لي شجدو
قال لو بوه خفت عنك لا تفقد اكنتم سرك عن خوتك لا تعدو
سمعوا الاولاد قول بوهم متفرد كانو فالدار ليس بانو ما بعدو
قالو لا بد يوسف عننا اتسيد

قال نقتلوه حق ونغصبو قدو

ما عرفو بالكريم اتصرف وعدو

آيا سيدي من بعد فات الرؤيا عي يعقوب جاوه ولادو قالو السبع بدر كسبنا كل يوم يزداد

ردنا نصيده أبابا نمشيو ليه لبلادو نديوا يوسف معنا يلعب في حراج لوهاد

دوى وقالهم يوسف صغير خفت نفقادو خوفي عليه من ديب الغابة لا تجيه صياد

نطقو بالجميع وقالو لباه كيف يصطادو وحننا معاه تسعود والعاشر خوه كن أسد

وداز سيدنا يعقوب فيوسف قرة تمامو تمشي مع خوتك للصيدا يا هلال لعياد

رغدو عوينهم وخرجو كلها مسلح جوادو وخرج بوهم يودعهم على طراف لبلاد

وحاز سيدنا يوسف لصدرو وقال فخطابو ربي يكون ليك يا ولدي فيما قضاه ورضاه

وارجع سيدنا يعقوب بنكدو وقال مكتابو لولا فرقت يوسف وخوتو حاسدين رؤياه

Third Verse:

مهما سفرو اولاد يعقوب وظفرو بيوسف خوهم كان فيه زين كثير

قبطوه وكشطوه فالغابا دصرو وبدواوا عذبو فيوسف حين صغير

وزاق فخوه قالو عني صبرو حتى نشرب عاد قتلوني تقدير

ودوى الكبير قال نرميوه فالبير ودوى واحد قال لهم انحرو

جابهو لحبال كتفوه على صدرو دللاه وقطعو الحبل في فم البير

وتعرض ليه سيدنا جبريل بشير

آيا سيدي جبريل قال ليه يا نبي الله يوسف الصابر	هنا بغاك مولاك تعبدو حتى تصرف قدار
البسو قميص الجنة والبير عاد لو زاهر	ولا رياض جنة وشجارو حابطين بتمار
البير كان حفرو سام وجعلو قريب من مصر	سماه بير الاحزان عرفوه بالطريق حمار
طركو يورّدو دلاوا دلوهم شوف لمقادر	واقبط سيدنا يوسف بالحبل يالحضّار
مهما تقال جبدوه صابو غلام فارد العاصر	قالو غلام هذا يشريوه منا الاتجار
رغدوه ركبوه وجا لهم خوه بالجري غاير	عبدى قالهم ردت نبيعو شرير مخّار
حنا نخلصوه اسيدي وشحال حببت الخاطر	تعطيووا قالهم فيه سبعطاش من الدينار
قبلو يخلصوه ويوسف حشمان حادر هذابو	خايف من خوتو صابر عن ما عطاءه مولا
واللي شراوه اداوه لمصر ناويين سبابو	باعوه بالتبر والجوهر عزيز مصر شراه

Fourth Verse:

صنعو حيللا اولاد يعقوب وعقبو	قالهم فينهو يوسف الحبيب
مدّو ليه القميص بالدم وكذبو	قالو يوسف راه كالكو هاذ الديب
وصاح وناح بوه من قرحة قلبو	يبكي ويقول يا الله الظلم صعب
نطقّ ليه الكريم د الديب وخطبو	قالو حشا نكلو والله رقيب
والانبياء اسيدنا ليس ذنبو	غير اولادك كيكدبو عالغريب
ارشدني ليه قالو نفدي طلبو	قال يا يعقوب ما نعلم بالغيب

واعرف قولو صحيح واطلق ذاك الديب

آسيدي ودار في اولادو يعقوب وقال يا لكذابا علاه يا ولادي ما خفتو من دعاي وذنوب

قالو يابانا كيف نكونو عليك كذابا الديب را كالو ما كان يقول غير لكذوب

واغناه على اولادو وبدا يبكي بدموع صباة ويقول يا ولدي يوسف هكذا قضى المكتوب

وشدّ فالاحزان وسار ينوح شقّ فالغابا ويقول يا وليدي يوسف اجي لبوك يعقوب

يضلّ فالطريق يسولّ من ساكنين عزّابا لله كان ما ريتو ولدي كبدي ومحبوب

حتى بياض عينيه بالبكا كل أمر بسبابو وجاه سيدنا جبريل بأمر الكريم ونهاه

الله قال ليك آيعقوب انت نبيه فكتابو وايلا بقيت تشكي عالخلق را اسمك يسعاه

Fifth Verse:

يوسف شراه امير مصر وعزّو وزنو بالدبر وفضة ولوزيز

ادّاه معاه عند زوليخة حرزو وفرغات عليه شي كساوي من يبريز

وتغرمات في بهاه ونوات تفرزو زوليخة يا فهيم امراة العزيز

لاموها شي نسا قالت لهم برزو حتى تشفاوا زين يوسف راه غريز

قبطوا هاذ المواس والليم وحزو مهما يدخل كل وحدة ليه تميز

واركب عنهم غير شافوه وتبهزو وبدواوا يقطعو اديهم بتحريز

ما فطنو بالحديد من زينو الغريز

آسیدی ویداوا کیقولو یا زولیکه یوسف الفایز	حنا عبید زینو وانت لینا علیه حرّاز
ومشاوا کیقولو یوسف زینو الكل ما بارز	قدّام الرجال اهتزو ولا ادروا تمیاز
بداوا الرجال یضربوهم والبنات تتقامز	یوسف کیقولو نمشیوا معاه حتی لحکاز
اریام من غرامو ماتو وشواب دون لعجایز	فاتو غرام زولیکها ما شافوه داز فمکاز
فناات من غرامو زولیکها یوم حازتو دایز	قالت یا حبیبی یوسف ازها معای تعزاز
هرب منها تبعاتو شدّات لیه فثیابو	نخاف قالیهها من ربی ما نقد نعصاه
سارت کترغبو حتی راد القتیل بعثابو	ملاک قالیه أیوسف ارجع توب لله

Sixth Verse:

زولیکها قابطا فیوسف یا فطّان	وتراود فیه قالیهها ما نزنی
قطعت لیه القمیص ودخل السلطان	قالت لو شوف ها غلامک قابطنی
ودوی یوسف قالو هایا سلطان	هی راودتني وقالت افعلنی
قال الصبی من المهد ما هو خوآن	انظر القمیص یا العزیز افهمنی
ایلا مقطوع ماللور کید النسوان	وايلا مقطوع من القدام ما یعني
قال السلطان صح قولک یا ابني	

آیا سیدی خرج سیدنا یوسف والسلطان خاف عدیانو ییداوا فی شتم زولیکها مراتو وبنّت السلطان

وقبط سیدنا یوسف فالمشور وقال لعوانو ادّیوه طوفوه فی مصر ونزلوه فسجان

ظَلُّوا يدوروه في مصر ويقول حق بلسانو	السجن خير لي يا ربِّي ولا نكون عصيان
وطال فالسجن وتخلَّى قط غير لازم مكانو	ولَّى فأرض مصر سلطان الملك ريّان
رادوا يوكلوا الساقى والخبّاز هدوك عشرا نو	باعو بعضهم للسلطان ودارهم فسجان
ولّاو من رفايق يوسف حداه جاوا جيرانو	قالّو الساقى ريت فمنامي عنب مزيان
نعصّرو خمر للسلطان يلذ بيه سلوانو	وقال ليه يوسف قدرك يعلى عند ريّان
وقالّو الخباز انا ريت خبز بطيابو	درتو فوق راسي ونزل الطير كامل كلاه
انت قالو راسك يتقطع بعد تصلابو	ويجي الطير ياكل من راسك يا شريك بالله

Seventh Verse:

احكم ريّان عالخبّاز بموتو	واقطع راسو اكلاوه طيور القفرات
والساقى طلّعو وعلى مرتبتو	منين جا يطلع قالّو يوسف كلمات
ادكرني قال ليه ونسى توصيتو	حتى كملّ حروف خمس سنين وفات
شاف السلطان في منامو رؤيتو	خرجو ليه مالبهر سبع بقرات
سمان وسبعة قبالتهم حدثو	كالو ذوك السمان سبعة عاجفات
واستعجب فالمنام وانظر بمقلّتو	بأمر المولى نباوا سبعة سنبلات
خضرين وسبعة قبالتهم نبتو	من بعد الخضرين نباوا سبعة يابسات
قعد مبهوض قال اراوا القرات	

عجزو بالجميع وقالو هذي ضغط جلمات	آيا سيدي جاواه المفسرين وحكى لهم رؤياتو
غضب عنهم وجاه الساقى وقال هيهات	نزع عنهم الراتب ريان بعد صولاتو
هاهو فالسجن يا سلطان يفك ليك الرؤيات	يوسف ولد يعقوب متلو عيني لكل ماراتو
حتى تشاهدو زوليخا هي ودوك البنات	امر عن طلوعو وآبى يوسف قال سجناتو
انا قالت لو رودتو ولا رضى الزلات	وجاوا البنات وزوليخا للمير ذنبها حكاتو
وحكى لسيدنا يوسف الرؤيا وسبع غلوات	وجاه سيدنا جبريل بأمر الكريم سعداتو
ودعى عالمساجن في ذاك اليوم ثلث دعوات	وبكى فالسجن وطلب المولى يقبل دعواتو
وكتب على السجن في بابو هذا قبر الحياة	هاهم باقيين لذابا يامن يقرأوا قصاتو
والتاج والمظل والنوبا قدامو وموراه	وطلع من السجن والوزرا قابطين فركابو
ونطق بالسلام العربي جابو بلغاته	حتى وصل للمشور والسلطان جاه بأدابو

Eighth Verse:

وشيت وصفها وانت لك هلتيق	قال السلطان ريت رؤيا يا يوسف
شفتيها يالمير سبع بقار عجيب	ونطق يوسف وقال حقا نعرف
وشفتي سنبول اخضر وآخر يابس جيف	كالو سبعة سمان وقلبك نرحف
قال خبرني جبريل عن الرب اللطيف	قال السلطان شكون خبرك يا يوسف
عندك سبع سنين من الخريف وصيف	الخضرن والسمان لا بد تصيب

واليابس والضعيف لا بد تهيف	تاني سبع سنين من الغلا والهيب
هذا ما راد بيه الجليل اللطيف	
آيا سيدي قال الهمام أيوسف الصديق باش نتكافا	اخرت قالو واخزن الغلة خريف والصيف
شكون قالو يحظيها قطفير كان واتنافا	انا قالو وليني عالحرت الخلافا
وزوجو السلطان بزوليخا مراة قطفيف	بكرة صابها ولدت ليه اولاد زوج بطرافا
واحرث من العام الثاني جاتو خريف وصيف	والثالث والرابع والخامس جات ليه صبيافا
والسات والسابع جاتو غلة بكل مصيف	ابني لها خزاين سماهم بالهرام فيافا
واخزن الزرع والتين وغللات سهم القطف	كملت السنين المخصابا يا الفاهم حسابو
وجات السنين الراعا كيف رايد الله	وبدا الجوع من كرش المير اللي عليه ترتابو
وفاق فالدجا كشكي بالجوع يامن سغاه	

Ninth Verse:

مكت الغلا فقوم بنو اسرائيل	فالعام اللولي تفقدر لكيال
وتولّى عالمك يوسف بن رحيل	واشرى قومو بالزرع نسا ورجال
جاوه خوتو يقيلو بالزاد قليل	وعرفهم بالجميع وكرمهم وسال
منين انتم قالهم فيد الجيل	حنا قالو اولاد يعقوب المرسل
شحال اولد قال لهم إسرائيل	قالو عشرة كبار والخامس ما زال

سيرو جيپوه قال لهم للتفضيل

ولا ما جبتوه ما عندي مكيال

قالو بونا عزيز عو كن هلال

آسيدي خوت سيدنا يوسف رجعو عند بوهم وقالو

سلطان مصر فرح بنا وفي لنا مكيال

وطلب عنا خونا بن يامين ابارك عيالو

ورد عنا البضاعة صبنها فالحمال

دوى وقال لهم ولدي بن يامين ليس نرسالو

وانا ارسلت خوث معكم يوسف ضي الهلال

فقدتوه عني وبكى قلبي بنار مشعالو

وبكيت عن ولدي يوسف حتى بياض النجال

قالو يا بانا ها عهد ربنا فكتابو

حتى نرجعوه لعندك موثقنا من الله

ارضى عنهم واعطاهم يمين حق بأدابو

رجعو لأرض مصر وخوهم لكبير وصاه

Tenth Verse:

وصلو مصر يوم جمعة او اتنين

قالو بونا خاف عننا مالعيان

وصانا قال ما ندخلو مجموعين

ندخلو متفرقين عن جمع الببيان

والملتقى قال فين في كرسي لميت

دخلو واجتمعو في دار السلطان

واخرج يوسف وشاف خيو بن يامين

وفرّح في خاطرو ونزلهم فمكان

وفرّقه فاطعام وبكى لو يا مين

زاد لعندو وقال مالك لا تحزن

كنبكي قال ليه عن يوسف الحنين

هو خوي الشقيق فقدوه الاخوان

انا يوسف قال لو ها يا بنيمين

واكتم سرك لا تعيدو عالاخوان

ونفرقك عنهم بالري وديوان

آيا سيدي كملت الضيافة وأمر يوسف شي فوصفانه إخبعو الطاسا فرحيل خوه الصغير تخزان

رغدو حمالهم وسارو يوسف قال لعوانو ردّو اولاد يعقوب وجابوهم قال بلسان

انتم آل يعقوب تسرقو من صرف بحسبانو سرقتمو الكاسا هدا هو الخير وحسان

قالو يالسلطان تقلبنا وكف لو مانو اللي القتها عندو حق عليه عام يسجان

فتحو حمالهم بحضاش وصابها بديوانو عند الصغير بيهم الطاسا ونحوه الاخوان

سبّو اولاد رحيل ويوسف سمعهم بأدانو دوى وقال لهم هدا يبقى فقلب السجان

ركبو خيولهم وسارو كلها يقول بلسانو باش نلقاو أبونا ضيّعنا عهدنا ولمان

وصلو وقال بوهم فاين يامين جا بمركابو قالو سرق طاسا لهمام فالسجن منكاه

بكى وقال لهم ترجعو بالكتاب تشهابو والكتب فالكتاب كيف وقع لمجدو وكذلك باه

Eleventh Verse:

وصلت البرا ليد يوسف وفتحها يوجد فيها السلام وقصة معناه

حنا هل البيت ما نديو شي شبهة وكّل بنا الله مكتابو وبلاه

وافهم دالقول يا لعزيز وانتهى جدي ابراهيم هو خليل الله

دار النمروود ليه نار شعلها طلقو فيها يسير ونجّاه الله

وأبي اسماعيل ليه رؤية صدّقها بكبش عظيم ادبح باش فداه الله

وإنا يعقوب نار يوسف كاتمها	عزّ اولادي فقيد عني ليس نراه
جود عليا بخوه السطوة تدرکها	وبكى يوسف على فراقو مع باباه
قبل البرا وفقلب جيبو خبّعها	وعلم خوه الصغير في دارو خلاه
وامر يوسف على خوتو جاوا حداه	
دوى وقال لهم لكعب الله عنه ناهى	وانا سألتكم بعشرة والصدق ليس قلتوه
بوکم قال ولدو يوسف مفقود ليه مُنتهى	غادي نسال هاد الطاسة الله جرى تسمعه
رغد القطيب وضرب الطاسا زقات وسغاها	قولي خبار يوسف ودوى هو وقال بعثوه
بسوم بخيس منين طلع من بير غابة خلاها	سختو بخوكم وبوكم النبي غدرتوه
لا بد من قتلکم بعشرة روسکم نوطاها	ويلا تصادقو مولانا شي باش ما تشفوه
قالو يا سلطان هد القصة حقيق درناها	جاوزت عنکم وخوكم الى جبتو تعرفوه؟
قالو يالعزيز خونا الى صورتو نظرناها	ما كان كيف زينو عرّى وجهو جميع عرفوه
بداوا كيوسو فالارض ودموعهم فتراها	وقال يا خويي لازم مکتابنا ندرکوه
بدّل عنهم الكسوة وراحو ففرح وطرابو	والغد قالهم أبي يعقوب شايق نراه
جيبو اولادکم وجيبو أبي ولامة حبابو	واعطاهم القميص المدکور في الكل قول معناه

Twelfth Verse:

ريح الصابا اطلب عاله القيوم	يبشّر يعقوب بيوسف عاد هُمام
واذن ليه الكريم وقطف نسمتهم	ودخل بها لعند يعقوب للرسام
يا ناس قال ها اولادي نسمتهم	ويوسف ولدي معهم يا الكرام
قالو ياالشيخ عقلك عاد يهوم	ونطق هو وقال الله العلام
في داك اليوم حق وصلو باباهم	قالو خونا فأرض مصر عاد همام
خود قميصو باش ينفتحو لنيام	
الله رد عن يعقوب بصرو ويوسف غنامو	وحمد رب اللورى يعقوب على خبار لهما
وقال يا ولادي يوسف ما لامكم بملامو	قالو يابانا ما حفنا بدنب وجرام
ورضى عليه وعلى ألو وتباعته وخدامو	وأمر بالمسير لمصر هو وجميع لكرام
رسلو رسولهم ليوسف تلقا لهم بقوامو	بالتاج والمظل والكادان والخيّل ألف غلام
ومنين قربو ليه خوذو (؟) ساجدين قدامو	وأمو وباه طاحو بي حجرو مع حضاش لغلام
وقال يا ولدي يوسف الله صادق كلامو	هدي منامتك أولدي يوسف زين المنام
وقام عنّقو بوه ودموعو حايفا من نيامو	وقال يا ولدي يوسف عنك عيب وحرام
علاه ما تكتب ليا وانطق ليه بوجابو	وقال يا أبا ما تدري فراقنا من الله
ادخل لأرض مصر وخوتو فارحين ونسابو	وكمل فرح يوسف بخوتو كاملين واباه

Refrain: Hear the story of Joseph whose tale is true
 You'll wonder at the day his brothers disappeared him--
 His father went blind from his crying

First Verse:

In the name of the Generous, Here's the key to success--It comes from His Book
 The best thing I can say in my composition is this: In the name of God
I give thanks for Ta-Ha, as much as the light and its darkness,
 As many [creatures] as the Lord created on his Earth and as populate his
 heaven,
And for his descendents and spouses, his supporters, and all their friends and
 followers
May the Lord keep us in his protection and grace,
 And following this prayer, we look to a tale whose teller is sincere:
The story of Joseph and his brothers, and the story of his father.

Second Verse:

Jacob, prophet of God, despaired at
 What he saw in his dream about his son
And what had become of the glorious Joseph
 God in his wisdom made him handsome and intelligent
He said to his father: Truly, I saw in my dream
 The sun, moon, and stars bowing to me
His father said to him: I fear for you lest you be lost.
 Keep your secret from your brothers--Do not cross them.

The children heard their father's words in isolation;

They were in the house, but hidden.

Later, they said: We've got to get him. ***³⁰⁵

We'll kill him! We'll seize his position.

Little did they know that the promise of the Generous is ever fulfilled.

Dear Listener, after Jacob's dream faded, his sons came to him.

They said: the lion is rapidly encroaching on our livelihood every day

Let us hunt him, father, and track him into his own lands.

We could take Joseph with us to play in the woods of the lowlands.

He spoke and said to them: Joseph is young, and I am afraid to lose him.

I fear the wolf of the forest might come hunting for him.

They said as one: How could it get him

When there are nine of us, and the tenth his full brother, as strong as a lion

Jacob gave in [though] Joseph was the light of his eyes.³⁰⁶

305. Three asterisks appear in this verse, and the following verses, to indicate the *maksūr l-jnāḥ* / 'broken wing' meter. There is an unsettling pause in this space, following the first half of a verse that has no second half (as if it were a bird missing a wing). The balance is regained by the addition of a sound or words, usually *Ā yā sīdī* / O Sir. These pauses occur in very strategic locations in the narrative.

306. *Qurrat tmādūh* / 'the coolness of his eyes' is a phrase from classical Arabic (like the English expression, 'the apple of his eye,' but originating from the hot environment of sixth century Arabia). Here it is given a distinctive twist because the second word is specific to *malḥūn*.

Go hunting with your brothers, my crescent of joy
They took up their provisions and went out, each one's horse armed
Their father accompanied them to the edge of their lands to see them off
He held Joseph to his chest, saying:
May God be with you my son, in that which God ordains and approves
Jacob returned despondent and said: It is his destiny,
[Even] if I did not let Joseph go with his brothers, jealous of his vision.

Third Verse:

No matter how far the sons of Jacob traveled and how much they dominated
Joseph, he remained beautiful.
They grabbed him and stripped him in the forest, and insulted him;
They started tormenting him when he was small.
He wailed to his brother saying: Be patient with me
Wait until I drink before you kill me in fairness
One said to the others: [Let's] slaughter him.
But the eldest said: We'll throw him in the well.
They tied his arms across his chest,
Then lowered him and cut the ropes in the mouth of the well.
And there appeared to him the angel Gabriel as a messenger of good tidings. ***
Dear Listener, Gabriel said to him: O prophet of God, Joseph the Patient
This is where your Lord wants you to serve so his decrees come to pass.
He dressed him in a robe of paradise, and the well seemed to bloom--It became
A garden of paradise, its trees laden with dates

The pit of the well was desolate, and it placed him near Egypt;
 He called it 'the well of sadness.' A donkey on the road recognized it
 They stopped to water the donkey, lowering a bucket to see the water level
 Joseph grabbed the rope--O people!
 Even though it was heavy, they pulled and found a youth outstanding in his time
 They said: With a boy like this, the merchants will buy him from us
 They lifted him astride [a donkey], and his brother came running jealously
 My servant--he said--I want to sell him--What a nasty leech!
 We'll pay for him, sir--How much were you thinking?
 Would you give for him, he said, seventeen dinars?
 They accepted, paid him, and Joseph lowered his eyes in shame
 Fearing his brothers and bearing what his Lord ordained for him
 Those who bought him took him to Egypt intending to trade him
 They sold him for raw gold and jewels; 'Aziz of Egypt bought him³⁰⁷

Fourth Verse:

The sons of Jacob came up with a ruse and carried it out
 He asked them: Where is dear Joseph?
 They handed him the bloody shirt and, lying,
 Said Joseph, as you see, that wolf ate him
 The Generous made that wolf talk to him

307. 'Azīz can be interpreted here as a name and a title because the name means 'exalted in rank.' Like Yusuf Ali in his translation of the Qur'an, I have retained the word 'Aziz, although another translator might render it Grand Chamberlain or minister.

He told him: For shame, how could I eat him when God is watching
With the Prophets--Dear Listener, it is [clearly] not his fault--

It's only that your sons are lying about the absent one
Guide me to him [said Jacob] to sacrifice myself for his sake.

He said Jacob, I do not know the unknown.

He knew that his speech was true, and he let that wolf go.***

Dear Listener, Jacob turned on his sons, saying: You liars!

Why my sons did you not fear my cursing and [your] sins?

They said, Father, how could we be lying to you?

The wolf really ate him. What he said was just lies.

Alas for the fall of his sons--he began crying with flowing tears.

Saying, O my son Joseph, what was written has come to pass.

He was overcome with sadness, and wandered wailing and pushing through the
forest

Saying, O my little Joseph, come to your father Jacob.

He got lost on the road, asking the residents

By God, have you by any chance seen my dear beloved little boy

Joseph?³⁰⁸

Until his eyes went blind with crying. -- Everything has a purpose.

Gabriel came to him on the authority of the Generous, and stopped him:

God says to you, Jacob, you are a prophet in his book and

If you continue complaining to people, they will slander your name

308. Literally, he asks: Have you seen my son, my liver and beloved? 'Liver,' like 'heart,' is a term of endearment.

Fifth Verse:

[As for] Joseph, the prince of Egypt bought him, and honored him

He treasured him greatly, like silver or gold pieces.

He took him along to Zulaykha, his private consort.

She showered him with robes of gold

She fell for his splendor and plotted to get him alone

O Wise Listener, the wife of 'Aziz

Some women mocked her [infatuation]. She told them: You stand in his presence

Wait 'til you're cured. Joseph's beauty is really super-natural.

They gripped those knives and citrus fruits, and cut.

As he approached, each one singled him out.

He rode away from them as soon as they saw him. They felt rejected and

Began to cut their own hands as an outlet [for their frustration]

They did not even notice the steel because of his innate allure.***

Dear Listener, they began saying: Zulaykha, Joseph's the winner

We are slaves to his beauty, and you must guard him on our behalf!

They went, saying Joseph's beauty outshines everyone,

[Even] in front of the men, they trembled with no discretion

The men started hitting them while the women shielded each other

Joseph--they said--We'll go with him to the ends of the earth.

[Some] ladies died of their infatuation with him, going gray without growing old

They surpassed Zulaykha's passion--What they felt entered the realm of
the metaphorical

Zulaykha died of desire for him the day she caught him as he was passing

She said: Darling Joseph, [come] thrive with me in glory

He fled from her. She followed, grasping him by his clothes

I fear my Lord he said--I cannot disobey

She set to inciting him until he complained that he wished he could die

An angel said to him: Joseph, repent to God

Sixth Verse:

[So] Zulaykha is grasping Joseph--O intelligent one

Seducing³⁰⁹ him, [but] he said: I will not commit adultery

She tore his shirt, and the sultan entered

See here, your servant has grabbed me

Joseph spoke and said to him: O Sultan,

She seduced me and said: Take me

The servant said in deference, He did not betray you--

Look at the shirt, 'Aziz: Understand what I'm saying:

If it is torn from behind, [it is a case of] women's wiles

And if it is torn from the front, then it doesn't mean that

The sultan said: What you say is true, son***

Dear Listener, Joseph went out and the sultan feared his enemies

[Lest they] demean Zulaykha, his wife and the daughter of a sultan

He grabbed Joseph in the hall, and said to his men:

Make him an example throughout Egypt, and put him in prison

309. This word comes from Qur'an 12:23.

They took him around Egypt on display, while he spoke truth:

Prison is better for me, Lord, so I commit no sin

He remained in prison, resigned himself, and just stayed in his place

In the land of Egypt, king Rayyan came into power.

The cup bearer and the baker, those companions of his, went to feed him and

They sold each other out to the sultan, and he put them in prison,

[Where] they became Joseph's friends. They were placed beside him.

The cup bearer said to him: I saw in my dream exquisite grapes

I was squeezing them into wine that would give the sultan's pleasure

Joseph said to him: You will rise in Rayyan's favor.

The baker said to him: I saw delicious bread

I put it on my head, and birds descended and ate it all

You, he said, will have your head cut off after it is crucified

And the birds will come to eat your head, you idolater

Seventh Verse:

Rayyan sentenced the baker to his death

His head was cut, and the birds of the wilderness ate it

[As for] the cup bearer, he released him, and he elevated his stature

When they came to release him, Joseph shared some words with him:

Remember me, he said, [but] he forgot his request

Until five calendar years came to pass

The Sultan saw a vision in his sleep:

Seven fat cows came to him from the sea

Then seven appeared in front of them
The seven lean cows ate the fat cows
He was perplexed in his dream, and considered its meaning
By God's command, seven green sheaves of grain appeared
And seven others facing them [also] sprouted
Seven dry sheaves followed the seven ripe sheaves
He sat stunned, and said show me the meaning***
Dear Listener, the dream interpreters came, and he told them his dream
They were stumped, and said that it was nonsense
Rayyan docked their pay after his angry display
He was angry at them. The cup bearer came to him and said: Hark!
Joseph, son of Jacob, described everything that my eyes saw
He is in prison, O Sultan, and he can unravel the meaning of your dreams
He called for Joseph's release, but Joseph refused and said she imprisoned him--
Until Zulaykha and the other women testify [to his innocence]
Zulaykha and the women came to the ruler and related her guilt
She said: I seduced him, and he would not be humiliated
Gabriel came [to Joseph] by God's will--how fortunate for him!
He told our honorable Joseph of the dream and the seven years of plenty
He cried in prison, and requested that his Lord accept his prayer
He uttered three prayers for the prisoners on that day
And they remain there today, for anyone who reads his tale
He wrote on the door of the prison, the grave of life
He left the prison, the ministers holding his legs

The crown, royal parasol, and entourage before and behind him
Until the procession arrived, and the Sultan came to greet him ceremoniously
He greeted him in the Arab manner, and Yusuf answered in his language

Eighth Verse:

The Sultan said: I had a dream, Joseph
I want to tell it to you, and have you tell me its meaning
Joseph spoke and said: Actually, I know it
Your majesty saw seven lean cows
Eat seven fat cows, and your heart bled
And you saw a healthy sheaf of grain, and a dry sheaf of grain
The Sultan said: Who told you, Joseph?
He said, Gabriel told me on behalf of the good Lord
The green sheaf and the fat cows certainly mean that
You will have seven years of fall and summer
And the dry and weak mean
You will have seven years of famine and disaster
That is what the kind and Glorious One intended ***
Dear Listener, the worried one said: Joseph, my friend, what shall we do
Store the harvest of the autumn and summer
Who will oversee the operation
I will if you appoint me
He appointed him overseer of the stores of Egypt
And married him to Zulaykha,

Who bore him two sons

There was a second year of autumn and summer

And a third and a fourth and a fifth of summer

And a sixth and seventh, and then disaster came in every form

He [had] built warehouses, and he called them the pyramids

He stored away the greens, hay, and sheaves of grain

The years of plenty came to a close

And the years of drought came, as God ordained

The hunger began in the belly of the ruler

And continued everywhere

Ninth Verse:

The famine spread to the Banu Israel people

In the first year they lost it all

They appealed to the ruler, Joseph

And men and women bought food from him

His brothers came to him

He recognized them, and was generous with them, asking:

Where are you from? They said:

We are the sons of Jacob the sent one

How many children are there, he asked

They said ten adults, and one still small

Go bring him

Or I will not be able to help you

They said he is very dear to our father, like a crescent moon ***
Dear Listener, Joseph's brothers returned to their father and said
The Sultan of Egypt honored us and gave us food
And he asked for our brother Benjamin, God bless him
And he gave us goods
He spoke and said to them: I will not send by son Benjamin
[For] I sent his brother Joseph with you, like a shining crescent
You lost him for me, and my heart cried with the fiery flames
I cried for my son Joseph until I went blind
They said: Father, it is ordained by God in his covenant
For us to return him to you, by God's promise
He accepted him, and gave them Benjamin gracefully
They returned to the land of Egypt and to their elder brother

Tenth Verse:

They arrived in Egypt on Friday or Monday
Saying our father was afraid for him and
Advised us not to enter all together, [but]
To enter in small groups from different gates [of the city]
And to meet at the throne
They entered, and gathered in the home of the Sultan
Joseph came out and saw his brother Benjamin
He was so happy inside, and he had them dismount
And he took them to eat, and Benjamin began to cry

He approached him and asked: What's wrong? Do not be afraid
I am crying, he said, for dear Joseph
He is my full brother, and my other brothers lost him
I am Joseph, Benjamin, [but]
Keep it a secret from the others
So I can keep you apart from them legitimately. ***
Dear Listener, when the hospitality had been completed, Joseph ordered servers:
Hide the cup in the baggage of my little brother
They hoisted all their baggage, and started off. Then Joseph said to his retainers:
Bring back the sons of Jacob. They brought them, and he said:
You the people of Jacob have stolen from the treasury
You stole the exquisite cup
They said, O Sultan, we will look for it
He said, he who has it will be sentenced to one year in prison
They opened the baggage of the eleventh [son], and found it
In the bag of the little one
The sons complained, and Joseph said to them:
This one will remain in the heart of the prison.
They mounted their horses and started off, each one saying
Father will find that we have broken our promise
They arrived, and he said: Where is Benjamin?
They said, he stole a royal cup, and is now in prison
He cried, and said to them: Send a letter
And they wrote in the letter about him and his family

Eleventh Verse:

The letter was delivered into Joseph's hand, and he opened it

In it was a greeting and a tale:

We are the people of the house

And God has blessed us with his message

Please understand, Sir

My grandfather Ibrahim was a companion of God

In the house of Nimrod

Was God's blessing

My father Ismail had a true vision

Of a great ram that he butchered, as God's ransom, and

I Jacob am the father of Joseph

Honor my children, who lost my son

Show us mercy

Joseph cried over his estrangement from his father

He kissed the letter, and put it away in his pocket

And he informed his little brother

And called for his brothers to come to his side ***

He spoke and said to them: God detests lies, and

I asked you how many, and you said ten

Your father said that his son Joseph has been lost to him

I will ask this cup, and you must listen to what happens

He raised a staff and hit the cup:

Tell me the tale of Joseph
He told of his release from the well of the forest
You shamed your brother
You deserve to be killed
Unless you repent
They said, Sultan, the story is true. We did all that.
Would you know your own brother?
We know his image
Everyone could recognize his good looks
They began to kiss the ground, their tears flowing
He said, my brothers: We must fulfill our destiny.
He replaced their robes, and they celebrated
The next day, he said: I want to see my father Jacob
Bring your children, and my father, and all his loved ones,
And he gave them the infamous shirt in all the power of its significance

Twelfth Verse:

Before the sons arrived
Jacob sang Joseph's praises
And thanked God
For his blessings
And Jacob blessed his children
And thanked God for Joseph's presence among them
They said: Old man, your mind must be faltering [but]

He said: God is All-Knowing
That very day, the sons returned to their father
They said: Our brother has become the ruler of the land of Egypt
Take his shirt ***
God granted Jacob his sight
And Jacob rejoiced
And said Joseph did not blame you
They said: We did wrong
And he was blessed, he and all his family and their servers
He called for the move to Egypt for him and all the noble ones
They sent their messages to Joseph to meet them
With crown and royal parasol, and horses, and a thousand servants
And his brothers bowed to Joseph--
His mother and father, and eleven brothers, had fallen into his lap
And he said: My son Joseph, God's word has come true
This is your vision, my son Joseph, the most beautiful of dreamers
His father embraced him, his tears flowing
And said, my son Joseph, may evil and harm be ever far from you
You may tell me what to do
Joseph said: Our separation was God's will
He entered the land of Egypt, the brothers relieved
And Joseph's happiness was completed with all his brothers and his father

Story of Joseph - Hebrew³¹⁰

Refrain:

אליו קראת / בני בחירי / נפשי רצתה
הושיעה צור ישועתי / אדון עולם / יוצר כל הנשמות

First Verse:

אין חקר לשמחתו ולרנת-
נפשו, כי פתאום קרנו גבהה / לתשועה נפשו כמהה
י"ג שנים אסיר שהה / עת נהה / אורו גהה / לא תהה-
בעמדו לפני-לפני / לפני פרעה לשמוע החלומות
"ולו נגלתה" / צרת מצרים כמה רבתה
כרופא וחוזה עתי / ניבא על רעב / ויגל תעלומות

Second Verse:

נבואות מבארות כלבנת-
ספיר, שמע שוכן עליה / הראך רב עליליה
שבע שנים צפויה / פוריה / ויפה-פיה / והיה
שבע גדול, והנה / שני רעב, כשבליים צנומות
"חיש לעזרתה" / טרם תשום רהב וחלתה
יעשה פרעה יאתה / איש חכם נבון / יודע סתומות

Third Verse:

ידע פרעה ויבט בתמונת
פני יוסף כחמה ברה / הסב פניו ויקרא
הנמצא בעת צרה / איש עזרה / מגן ערה? / נחקורה

310. David El Kayam, Sefer *shir yedidot*, 419-422. Profuse thanks to Esther Raizen for helping me to understand and translate this text.

בשבת תחכמוני / איש שרוח אל בו עלי אדמות
"ולך יאתה" / אמר אל יוסף הנה אתה
על פיך ישק כל-ביתי בלעדיך איש, לא ירים רוממות

Fourth Verse:

דגלו הרים, ויתן את אסנת-
בת פוטי-פרע לו לאשה / על הכל שמו נשא
צפנת אבן הראשה / ובחרשה / אכל פשה / וישא
עד כי חדל המונה / אכל שדה כל-עיר הביא תוך חומות
"ולא נכרתה" / ארץ מצרים אך לה עלתה
ארוכה. קריה רבתי / לשבע שני / הרעב שוממות

Fifth Verse:

וכל-מצרים באו בתלנת-
לבם, על כי הרעב רבה, / לשבור בר, כי נכזבה-
תקות נפש רעבה / לסבה / כי נקבה / נרקבה-
תבואת שבע שני / השבע, שאצרו קמות ערמות
"סבה נהיתה" / כי ארחת אחי יוסף חנתה
ביתה יוסף. ירדו בלתי / בנימין, כי אמר אביו, פן ימות

Sixth Verse:

דבר אתם קשות, ובמגנת-
לב אמר, מרגלים בכם / לא יאמנו דבריכם
כי אם בבוא אחיכם / ואתכם / בית משמרכם / ובשרכם
יאסר פה כי אני / ירא אלהים, לא אעשה אשמות
"קחו ארחתה" / ולכו, והביאו, כי כלתה-

נפש בתיכם ובתי / בניכם, כל, נערים ועלמות

Seventh Verse:

קולי לא שמעתם, גם לתחנת-

נפש הילד לא שמענו / נם ראובן באונו

על כן באה עלינו, / אחינו, / צרתנו / הן מנו

נדרש דמו נתאנה / ולא ידעו כי שומע במזמות

"אוי לעברתה!" בשמוע יעקב כי קשתה-

יד המושל, ולו תפתה / ערוך מאתמול, ולפניו רב חמות

Conclusion / *dridkah*

יום ישועתה	מעפר תצמח וגם רמתה
זרם הזמן יחתה	בתוך צרה רוחה ונחמות
מימי קדמתה	גם כי היא ישנה ובלתה
תחליף כח ותאתה	תחדש כנשר גף ועצמות
אם לו נראתה	אזי ערפל תעיק תחתה
צר ואור לשמאלה תטה	מארבע רוחות תנהר על מקומות
כוכבי יפעתה	ירוצון כיום אשר פשתה
גבורת בני אפרתי	על אויביהם ברב רצח ונקמות
יערי ערבתה	עלי פלגי המים חרטה
כגן-עדן מלאתי	כערבות העומדות באלמות
גני חמדתה	בגיל דיצה ורנה דשתה
נחלי מים ותשטה	לכל-רוח תעבוד השדמות
פרחי נצתה	לפטורי פרחי-צצים דמתה
ורוח צח כאיש פותה	יגלה בקרבם רקמי רקמות
היכלי צלתה	ברב תענוג וגיל שבתה

הצלחת חלדה, שומרת פעמות	צופיה הליכות בתי
גדלו ורמו ותו תותה	ילדי שליתה
ללמדם ולשכללם בחכמות	מתו-חיים לא תחטיא
מכל מיני סחורה קנתה	רוכלי כנעתה
ברב חכמתה רוכלת באמות	מצפון זהב יאתה
בגבורי-חיל חיל צרתה	רוכבי סוסתה
תתחר לגבור כאיש בעל מלחמות	הכרתי הפלתי
מנשב הרוחות לא נטתה	אשי רצפתה
על סביבה תשליך בוז וחרמות	שלהבת מורא תעטה
אנא, יי, שוב שבותה	מלא תקותה
יתגדל על כל בעז תעצומות	בית מקדשי שאהבתי

Refrain:

To Him you called / O my son, my chosen one / the one who my soul desires

Save me, O rock of my redemption / master of the universe / creator of all souls

First Verse:

There is no limit to his happiness and the rejoicing of his heart,

for suddenly his stature rose.

For salvation his soul yearned--for thirteen years he remained a prisoner

When he longed, and his light was faltering, he did not doubt.³¹¹

Upon his standing close before Pharoah to hear the dreams, 'to him it was revealed.'³¹²

The toil of Egypt, how great it was. As a physician and a prophet

311. The *or* / light here refers to Joseph's internal light, his energy or essence.

He predicted the famine--He uncovered the mysteries...

Second Verse:

Prophecies interpreted like clear sapphire, The One on high communicated [to you],
The One of a great many deeds showed you³¹³

Seven years are predicted for the fruitful, gorgeous [land of Egypt] when there would be
Great fullness, then--behold! [Seven] years of famine, like emaciated sheaves

"Make haste to help her" before Rahav is made desolate and ill.³¹⁴

What Pharoah will do is to bring in an intelligent, wise man who knows mysteries.³¹⁵

Third Verse:

Pharoah knew, and he looked at the image of the face of Joseph like a radiant sun.

He turned his face and called: Can there be found in a time of trouble a helpful man

312. Exact reference unclear.

313. This epithet is a quotation from Jeremiah 32:19.

314. Quotation from Psalm 71:12. 'Rahav' is used in the Hebrew Bible to refer to Egypt and to Babylon, and it may be translated as 'The Bragger.' It derives from a name for a mythical sea monster. In this poem, it conveys the immense power perceived in Egypt prior to the famine, and it also reminds the Jewish minority of Morocco of the transience of earthly authorities.

315. The poet refers to Genesis 41:33, altering the Biblical phrase *ish navon ve-chakam* to *ish chakam navon*. It is a clear allusion, with a slight alteration to show creativity.

A shield from destruction? Let us investigate in a council of advisers whether there is
A man on Earth in whom is the spirit of God. "It is meant for you."³¹⁶
He [Pharoah] said to Joseph: Here, all of my house will go by the word of your mouth
Without you, no one will rise highly...³¹⁷

Fourth Verse:

[Pharoph] raised [Joseph's] stature and gave to him Asnat, Potiphar's daughter, as a wife
Above everyone, his name was lifted: Tsafnat, the capital stone.
So in the groves food was abundant and [Joseph] gathered innumerable quantities
The food of the field of every town he brought within the walls and
the land of Egypt "was not cut off"³¹⁸
But the great city was healed from the seven desolate years of hunger.

Fifth Verse:

All of Egypt came with the agony of their hearts for the hunger was great
To find food, for the hope of the hungry soul was unfulfilled
Because it was riddled with holes and rotten--the crop of seven years of fullness
That they stored and stacked in piles "for a reason"³¹⁹
In order for the caravan of Joseph's brothers to reach Joseph's house

316. Quotation from Jeremiah 10:7.

317. Alternative interpretation of this line: Except for you, no one will rise so high.

318. A variation on Genesis 41:36.

319. Paraphrase of I Kings 12:15.

They went down without Benjamin because his father said: Lest he die.

Sixth Verse:

He spoke to them harshly with a heavy heart, he said: There are spies among you!

Your words cannot be trusted unless your brother comes.

As for you, in prison you will be held, for

I am a fearer of God, not one who will do wrong. "Go back to the road."³²⁰

Go and bring [food] for the life of your families is expiring, the families of your children,

Everybody, even the young men and the young women.

Seventh Verse:

You did not listen to me, and we all failed to listen to the pleading of the boy,

Reuben spoke with authority: Therefore there befell us, O brothers, our trouble.

Thus his blood is required of us. So let us plan.

They did not know that one was listening to their scheming.³²¹

"Woe for this trouble!" on Jacob's hearing that the ruler's hand had hardened.³²²

To him, [it was as if] a pit of fire was kindled from his past, and ahead was only
much anguish.

Conclusion / *dridkah*

320. Source unknown.

321. 'One' here refers to Joseph.

322. The opening exclamation expresses Jacob's emotion, and may be a quotation.

[On] the day of salvation,	from dust will grow and rise deliverance
The flow of time will bring	in the midst of trouble relief and repose
From olden days	even that which became old and tattered
Will regain strength and will arrive	renewed in wings and bones like an eagle ³²³
[And] the one who was [barely] seen	will now subdue the heavy clouds
The sun and the moon she moves aside.	From all four directions they stream. ³²⁴
The stars of her splendor	rush like in the day when there spread
The might of the sons of Ephraim over their	enemies with much cruelty and vengeance.
The forests of her plains	over streams of water are rooted
Like the garden of Eden, full	like willows standing in groves
The gardens of her loveliness she gathers	with happiness, glee, and joyful singing
She spreads streams of water	in every direction, cultivating the fields
In the blossoming of her buds,	she resembles a stem of blooming flowers
A clear wind like a man who opens them,	revealing their textures upon textures.
Within the palaces of her shade	she rested with much pleasure and joy,
Watching over the places where her world	flourishes, she preserves its perimeters. ³²⁵

323. See Psalm 103 for strength renewed like an eagle (*nesher*), similar to the legendary phoenix.

324. She moves them, literally, to her left. The sun and the moon refer to Isaiah 5:30, in which context they are usually translated 'darkness and sorrow.' However, I have opted for this alternative from a commentator. The streaming hosts are the numerous Jewish communities, rushing in multitudes like formidable waves.

325. The connotation here is like the woman of valor watching over her home's

The children of her womb
 With the sign of life, without failing to
 From the vendors of all products
 From the North comes gold, and with
 Her cavalry are the strongest of heroes;
 Like the Creti and Pleti,³²⁷
 The flames of her fire,
 She wears the flame of awe.
 Fulfill her hopes
 The temple that I love,

They grew, rose, and she marked them
 teach them and polish them in wisdom.
 she deals in all kinds of merchandise:³²⁶
 great cleverness she trades among nations.
 she is a formidable foe to any army
 She fights to win, like a seasoned warrior.
 blown by the winds, do not bend.
 All around she hurls scorn and destruction.
 Please God bring her back [from exile]
 let it rise above all, powerful and strong.³²⁸

Contemporary Songs:

***Ḥan w-shfaq* / Have Mercy**

Medley by Nass El Ghiwane,
 composed of excerpts from three poems by ‘Abd al-Qādir al-‘Alamī

traditions.

326. Again, the community is compared to the woman of valor in Proverbs 31.

327. The Creti and Pleti (or Cherethites and Pelethites) are historical / mythical heroic peoples. See II Samuel 15:18.

328. See Psalm 68:36. Psalm 68 is probably an inspiration for the entire *dridkah*.

كيف يواسي اللي فَرَقَ محبوبُه وبقى بلا عقل

ف لرسام فريد

انا كيف جفاني حبيب قلبي ما خلا غير صورته

ونعوته وخیاله

مَنْ لَا عَمْرِي نُظِرْتُ زَيْنَ ف لبدور بحاله

واعطف يا صابغ النيام

ارفق آمالكي بعبدك

يهديك الله لا تعذب قلبي قاسيت ما كفى

يا بدر النبا مَنْ الغتام

وانا الملسوع بالغرام

انت الموصوف بالمحاسن

أما بَرَدْتُ مَنْ جمار فقلبي مُحال تنطفئ

وعيت ملازم السقام

ودموعي حايفة سجام

نبات نساھر ليالي

على محبوب خاطري مَنْ جار عليّ ولا عفا

نبكي ونوح فالظلام

خدك يضوي عل الرسام

أمتي يا مالك نشاهد

ونقول بریت مَنْ علالي ونسيت محايين جفا

ما بين مُحافل الريام

تَحْيِينِي غير بالسلام

رَغَبُوا تاج لَمَلَحَ فَيَا

وتراعي صِلَة لَكَرَام

لا خير في مَنْ جفا حبيبهِ وغدر بعد الموالفة

فهواك أَمالكي فنيت

لا حالة كيف حالتي

فطريق هواك ما عييت

حتى تقضى حاجتي

وايلا انا نَلْتُ ما نويت

منك يا روح راحتي

نفرح ونقول : ما مشا

تمجادي في البها حرام

يا مَنْ لا ساغ لي مَرام

سَمع قول لَحسود فيّا وتكدر بعد ما صفا

هادي مُدّة بلا حساب

وانا كامِي علايلي

كانتني ساعة الصواب

تقضى فيها مسايلي

كنطلب عاتق الرقاب

يجمع بيّا غزيلي

محبوبي راشق لَهْداب

ناير لَخدود قاتلي

أما دَوّرت مَنْ وَقَات

كُنْتُ مَغْطِي بثوبها

تسوى الياقوت والثقات

السعد سقام مَنّها

والكاس مدامعه جرات

على الشمعة وضيها

ما تسمع غير كُـب هات

والخمرة باح سرها

صَدَقُوا مَنْ جَرَبُوا وقالوا

ما دامت للزهو إيام

لو كان الشمس فسمها تبقى ديمًا مشرفة

لو كان تدوم للقدام

حَنِّ واشْفَقْ واعْطَفْ برضاك يا المزيان لا سماحة ميعاد الله يا الهاجر

يا للي قلبه بعد زيان عاود شيان يا اللي عدتني مَن شوري حذير نافر

ياك ما حالو ما بيناتنا العديان ياك ما عولتني مَن جنبني تسافر

ياك ما جنيتني شوفة مَن نجال مَعِيان زَلَعَكْ تزليعة لعدو بقلب كافر

نَزَلْتُ ساحل بحرك زعما نعود رويان مشارعك ندريةا ونعود بك ظافر

حسنت بك النية وقريت فيك لآمان حين كنتني تاتيني فكل يوم زاير

ايلا حضرتي تحضر ليًا معاك لذهان وايلا تغيب نَذَهَلْ ويعيب لي خاطر

آباش نطفي نيرانك مَن صميم لكنان وباش يبرد قلبي مَن حرها الزافر

ايلا هداك عليًا الرحمان يا المزيان رَدْ سيف صدودك لجواه يا القاهر

محبتك يشهد لي بها الإنس والعجان ما بقي ما نكتم بَحْتْ بالسرائر

How to console one whose beloved has left him

mindless at the traces alone

Me--how could the love of my heart abandon me--

She left nothing but her image,

Her shape, her shadow

The one who--my whole life--I've never seen beauty among the moons like hers

Be kind, my lady, to your servant

Have a care, O you of colorful eyes

O moon of news that brightens the darkness

God guide you--Don't hurt my heart--it's suffered enough

You're the one known for charms;

I'm the one who's been smitten by passion

I've passed through the stages of illness

No ember in my heart cooled or could go out

I spend my nights sleepless,

my tears flowing endlessly

I cry and moan in the darkness

for my beloved who tries my patience with no mercy

When, my lady, will I see

your countenance shining on the traces

from among the droves of gazelles

and I can say: I was healed of my illness, and forgotten any coldness

Refrain:

O crown of beauty, want me!

Greet me, at least say hello

Observe the traditions of the noble ones:

They are no good who leave their lovers after letting them get used to intimacy.

In your love, my lady, I melted away

There's no case quite like mine.

In the path of your love, I never tired

until I'd accomplished my aim

And if I gave you a gift, I never expected anything

from you, O my heart's comfort.

I'd be happy and say:

My attentions to beauty weren't lost.

**

O you who didn't entertain my case

I hear the haters' talk about me and feel even worse

All this time with no account

and I'm wasting away

I hope for a moment of fairness

in which will be resolved my problems

I ask that the Vigilant One

will reunite me with my little gazelle

My beloved, graceful of eyelashes

her face lit up, speaking to me

**

The time I've spent

warmed by her clothing of kindness

is worth emeralds

and our happiness was enriched by it
The glass, its tears flow
over the candle and its light
One hears only: Pour! Here, take it
The wine's secret is divulged
Where are the white days of pleasure, when you were so drunk that you did not slumber
The sultan of the yard, without worries
Too popular for the eyes of the enemy, and on you a crown one could not miss

**

They believed those who tried it out, saying
there are still many days for fun and play
If time were coming to an end,
then the sun would remain always in the East.

**

Have compassion and pity, granting your acceptance, you beauty
God's arrangement does not wait for [anyone]
You whose heart was so good, and became so mean
You responded to my words by being wary and evasive
Tell me enemies have not parted us
Tell me that you're not thinking of leaving to roam
Tell me that you did not receive an ill-meaning glare
The rotten-hearted enemy's swindling has robbed you
I went down to your sea shore--Do I return having drunk [my fill]
Knowing your paths, returning with you victorious

I read safety in you, when

You used to come visit me every day

When you would come, my mind would appear with you

And when it would go, I became dazed and lost to myself

How could I put out your flames from the core

With what could my heart cool of its sulfurous heat

If the All-Merciful guides you to me, O beauty,

then put away the sword of your distance, O conqueror

Humans and jinn testify on my behalf to your love

Nothing remains for me to hide--I let out all my secrets

Jūdī bi-riḍāk / Be Generous with Your Regard³²⁹

تَفْجِي هُموم قلبي نَبرا قولو ليأمنة تاتي لي

نَعْمَ في لمحاسن نظرة قولو ليأمنة تاتي لي

ضُوءِ يا القمرة جودي بالرضى جودي لي

بَبْهاك يا العذرا صَبْغي ظلام ليلي

واليوم أُرْماتني القُدرة أنا لبيب وحيلي

ولا ترميني في فَهْرَة³³⁰ لله سُوي سُبيلي

Tell Yamna to come to me

329. Text from Omar Sayed, *Klām al-Ghīwān* / Ghiwan Talk, 20.

And relieve the concerns of my heart
Tell Yamna to come to me
So I can take in [her] features with a glance
Be generous with your compassion, be generous to me
Be bright, O moon
Paint the darkness of my night
With your brilliance, maiden
I'm clever, and [I've got] schemes
And today fate has thrown me
By God, ease my way
And don't throw me to constraint.

330. Transliteration:

<i>Gūlū l-Yāmna tāṭī lī</i>	<i>tafjī hmūm galbī nabrā</i>
<i>Gūlū l-Yāmna tāṭī lī</i>	<i>naghnām f-l-mḥāsīn naḍra</i>
<i>Jūdī bi-l-riḍā jūdī lī</i>	<i>ḍuwwī yā l-gamra</i>
<i>Ṣabghī ḍlām līlī</i>	<i>ba-bhāk yā l-‘adrā</i>
<i>Anā lbīb u-ḥīlī</i>	<i>w-al-yūm rmātnī l-quḍra</i>
<i>lillāh suwwī sbīlī</i>	<i>wa-lā tarmīnī f-qahra</i>

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